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Essay

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Agama dan Dialektika Toleransi-Intoleransi: Analisis Kritis atas Dinamika Keagamaan dalam Masyarakat Plural Indonesia

LAKPESDAM

Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumberdaya Manusia (Lakpesdam)
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Community-Based Tolerance Education Model for Urban Societies

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana komunitas Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) menerapkan pendidikan toleransi berbasis pengalaman dalam konteks masyarakat pasca-reformasi yang plural namun terfragmentasi. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan metode studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa model pendidikan non-formal berbasis komunitas yang diterapkan Sekodi berhasil menumbuhkan empati, kesadaran kritis, dan kohesi sosial melalui ruang belajar yang dialogis dan partisipatif. Model ini menantang keterbatasan pendekatan institusional dari atas ke bawah dengan memposisikan anak muda sebagai pencipta makna dan agen transformasi ideologis. Implikasi dari temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan akar rumput dapat memainkan peran penting dalam mendorong hidup berdampingan secara damai dan memperkuat ketahanan demokrasi di masyarakat yang beragam secara budaya. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengungkap kerentanan struktural akibat ketergantungan pada relawan dan infrastruktur informal yang dapat mengancam keberlanjutan dan replikasi inisiatif serupa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi orisinal dengan merumuskan pendidikan toleransi pada persilangan antara aksi sosial Weberian dan pembelajaran pengalaman ala Dewey, serta menawarkan model praktis pendidikan damai yang berakar pada konteks lokal.

Kata Kunci: Komunitas akar rumput; Indonesia; pembelajaran non-formal; pluralisme; pendidikan toleransi.

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how the Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) community implements experiential tolerance education within a pluralistic yet fragmented society in post-reformasi Indonesia. By using a qualitative approach with a case study method, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. The findings show that Sekodi's model of community-based non-formal education successfully cultivates empathy, critical awareness, and social cohesion through dialogical and participatory learning spaces. This model challenges the limitations of top-down institutional approaches by positioning youth as co-creators of meaning and active agents of ideological transformation. The implications suggest that grassroots education can play a significant role in promoting peaceful coexistence and democratic resilience in culturally diverse societies. However, the study also reveals structural vulnerabilities due to the reliance on volunteers and informal infrastructure, which may threaten the sustainability and scalability of such initiatives. This research contributes original insights by framing tolerance education through the intersection of Weberian social action and Deweyan experiential learning, offering a practical model of peace education grounded in local contexts.

Keywords: *Grassroots community; Indonesia; non-formal learning; pluralism; tolerance education.*

Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity (Wibisono, 2021). However, behind this plurality, interreligious tolerance remains a serious challenge that threatens social cohesion. Data from the Setara Institute (2022) indicates a rise in violations of religious freedom, including the forced dissolution of worship activities and the rejection of permits for constructing houses of worship (Setara Institut, 2022). Cases such as the riots in Poso and Ambon show that religious issues, especially those related to the establishment of places of worship, often trigger recurrent and destructive horizontal tensions. A concrete example is the rejection faced by the HKBP congregation in Soreang, Bandung, in 2023 (Awla, 2023). This phenomenon highlights the low awareness of religious tolerance even within a multicultural urban context such as Bandung. In response to this situation, grassroots initiatives like *Sekolah Damai Indonesia* (Sekodi, Indonesian Peace School) have emerged, aiming to instil values of diversity through non-formal and experience-based education approaches (Japar et al., 2020).

Previous studies on the promotion of religious tolerance can be categorized first into the formal religious community-based approach. This approach emphasizes the role of faith-based institutions and organizations—such as mosques, churches, religious councils, and interfaith networks—in mitigating conflict and fostering social harmony. Anjani and Kosasih (Anjani & Kosasih, 2024) illustrate how Islamic communities contribute to local conflict resolution, while Muslem (Muslem, 2023) highlights the role of ulama in Aceh in promoting tolerance through dakwah and interreligious dialogue. On a global scale, Haynes (Haynes, 2009) documents how religious actors in Mozambique, Nigeria, and Cambodia have functioned as mediators in peacebuilding processes. Williams (Williams, 2023) discusses the work of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), demonstrating the effectiveness of interfaith dialogue in breaking down stereotypes and addressing root causes of conflict. Educational initiatives are also noteworthy; Kruja (2022) and Odey et al. (2024) underscore the role of religious schools and university curricula in advancing interfaith understanding and peace education. Similarly, Mbugua and Ayoub (2023) examine grassroots peacebuilding efforts by the Anglican Diocese of Egypt aimed at countering extremism through youth engagement and interreligious literacy. While these studies offer valuable insights, they predominantly focus on top-down institutional mechanisms and the role of elite religious figures. What remains underexplored is how tolerance is cultivated from the bottom up, particularly through experiential, participatory models led by volunteer-based, non-formal communities. These models, such as those practiced by Sekodi, utilize lived experience, critical reflection, and direct social engagement—especially among urban youth—as tools for internalizing pluralistic values in a more sustainable and transformative way.

The second category centers on the formal education and school curriculum approach, which highlights the role of national education institutions—especially primary and secondary schools—in embedding values of tolerance through various subject matters and institutional practices. Scholars such as Lestari (Lestari, 2023) and Ruslana (Ruslana, 2022) have emphasized the role of civic education (PPKn) in teaching principles of democracy, justice, and equality as foundations for tolerance. Beyond these, recent studies offer a broader view: Atamturk (2018) identifies English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes as effective spaces for tolerance

education; and Harmanto et al. (2018) describe how Indonesia's civic education curriculum develops civic responsibility and moral unity. Character education programs also contribute significantly to cultivating empathy and multicultural awareness, while Raihani (Raihani, 2011) and Safina & Abdurakhmanov (2016) advocate for a whole-school approach, integrating tolerance values into institutional policies, leadership, teaching, and community engagement. Furthermore, technology-based learning during COVID-19 has shown promising results in enhancing tolerance among young students (Sakalli et al., 2021). Despite these advances, most studies remain focused on structured, curriculum-based learning environments and target students within formal schooling systems. There is limited exploration of experiential, informal, and socially embedded learning—especially among urban youth outside traditional educational settings—highlighting a critical gap that this study seeks to address through the case of Sekodi's volunteer-driven, dialogical education model.

The third category focuses on the cultural approach and local leadership, emphasizing how local wisdom, community traditions, and cultural-religious leadership contribute to sustaining harmony in diverse societies. Various studies demonstrate that local traditions embed values of cooperation, respect, and unity in daily social practices. For instance, Arsal et al. (Arsal et al., 2023) highlight how Central Javanese rituals such as *sedekah bumi* and *selamatan malam 1 Suro* promote intergenerational transmission of peace values and reinforce social cohesion. Similarly, the *Tepung Tawar* ceremony in South Sumatra, as analyzed by Alfitri and Hambali (Alfitri & Hambali, 2013), serves as a traditional mechanism for conflict resolution and reinforces community justice and reconciliation. Community-based traditions also play a vital role in managing diversity. The *Dalihan Na Tolu* system in North Sumatra, discussed by Muda and Suharyanto (2020), regulates social behavior through kinship principles, fostering interreligious harmony in multiethnic settings. In agricultural communities in Buton Utara, the *Mecula Haroano Laa* tradition promotes ecological care while reinforcing social solidarity (Syahrun et al., 2024).

Beyond customs, cultural-religious leaders act as trusted moral figures who mediate tensions and guide inclusive community interactions. Warwer (2024) examines the *Ondofolo* leadership in Papua, which upholds values of peace, brotherhood, and mutual respect within Christian and broader

community life. In Malang, Indonesia, interfaith cooperation among Muslim, Hindu, and Christian leaders during local festivals has also been shown to enhance interreligious communication and understanding (Gede Agung et al., 2024). These leadership practices underscore how indigenous authority structures and shared cultural capital serve as informal institutions for preserving harmony. While these studies provide rich ethnographic insights into local harmony, they tend to be descriptive and focus on relatively stable traditional communities. As a result, they often overlook the challenges of managing religious diversity in urban, pluralistic environments, where demographic complexity, ideological contestation, and social mobility demand new models of tolerance education. Moreover, non-formal, youth-driven initiatives—such as Sekodi—that adopt participatory and experiential approaches remain largely absent from the existing literature.

Building upon the three categories above, it becomes evident that while previous research has significantly contributed to understanding religious tolerance from institutional, educational, and cultural angles, a notable gap persists in the exploration of non-formal, youth-led, and experiential models of tolerance education—particularly within urban, multicultural contexts. Existing studies largely concentrate on structured institutions such as religious organizations, schools, or traditional communities, often overlooking how grassroots initiatives operate beyond these frameworks to address emerging challenges in dynamic urban settings. Furthermore, few studies critically examine how values of pluralism are internalized not merely through instruction or tradition, but through direct interreligious encounters, dialogue-based learning, and reflective practices. As a result, there is a lack of empirical evidence on how volunteer-driven communities like Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) mobilize alternative pedagogies to shape inclusive attitudes, foster empathetic youth engagement, and respond to socio-religious frictions in contemporary cities. This study seeks to fill that gap by analyzing the strategies, impacts, and challenges of Sekodi as a model of bottom-up, experience-based tolerance education, offering insights that complement and extend the dominant narratives in current tolerance education scholarship.

This study argues that Sekodi's experiential and dialogical approach to tolerance education offers a transformative model for fostering inclusive awareness and interreligious understanding, particularly among urban youth

who are often excluded from traditional educational and religious institutions. Unlike top-down or norm-based methods, Sekodi emphasizes direct engagement, critical reflection, and lived experience as pathways to cultivate empathy, break down stereotypes, and internalize pluralistic values. This argument is supported by Max Weber's theory of social action, which posits that human behavior is shaped by the subjective meanings individuals attach to their interactions—making experience-based learning a powerful medium for shaping attitudes and social conduct (Weber, 1978). In addition, John Dewey's experiential learning theory reinforces the idea that meaningful education emerges from active participation and reflective thought, rather than passive reception of information (Dewey, 1938). By facilitating interfaith encounters, inclusive discussions, and context-sensitive learning spaces, Sekodi provides an educational process that aligns with both theoretical models, offering a compelling alternative to formal curricula in promoting tolerance in complex urban societies.

The unit of analysis in this research is the Bandung chapter of *Sekolah Damai Indonesia* (Sekodi), which comprises facilitators, active participants, and organisers (Maspaitella & Rahakbauwi, 2014). This community is a non-formal, volunteer-based organisation focusing on tolerance education through dialogical and participatory approaches. The study adopts a qualitative approach with a sociological perspective. This design was chosen as it is well-suited for exploring the subjective meanings and complex social processes involved in shaping tolerance values through social interaction and experiential learning.

Data sources consist of both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with ten informants, including facilitators, regular participants, and community observers. Secondary data were drawn from internal documentation, training materials, community social media content, and news articles related to Sekodi's activities (Jaya, 2020). Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis (Siti & Silvia Senja Junista, 2025). Interviews were conducted on-site during community activities, guided by a semi-structured interview protocol. Observations were participatory in nature while maintaining objectivity, and documentation was used to complement and validate field findings.

Triangulation was applied to enhance data validity. Data were analysed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which comprises three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was conducted by filtering and selecting relevant information from interviews, observations, and documents in accordance with the research focus. The reduced data were then presented in descriptive narrative form to reveal emerging patterns and themes. Finally, conclusions were drawn by linking the field findings to Max Weber's theory of social action and John Locke's concept of tolerance, in order to understand the extent to which the Sekodi community fosters collective awareness and social transformation in the domain of religious tolerance (Webber, 2001). Throughout the research process, ethical principles were strictly observed, including informed consent and the confidentiality of participants' identities (Locke, 1991; Webber, 2001).

Results and Discussion

1. Community Profile of Sekolah Damai I ndonesia in Promoting Religious Tolerance

Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) is a youth community that focuses on interfaith harmony and diversity. The community was established de facto on May 26, 2016 and obtained official legality on August 22, 2016. Sekodi began as a discussion among alumni of the School of Peace, an interfaith program organized by the Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) since 2006 in various Asian countries. The alumni of this program are committed to practicing the values of peace in their respective environments, so in Indonesia, they began holding regular discussions since 2012. These discussions were initially small-scale and unsystematic until they developed into a community called "Mini Sekolah Damai Indonesia," which was later changed to Sekodi. In an effort to expand the community's reach, in 2018, Sekodi began to be active in Bandung under the leadership of Fanny Syariful Alam. In Bandung, Sekodi organizes weekly classes every Saturday with a main focus on conflict and conflict resolution. The community carries the mission "Moving from tolerance to accepting differences in diversity and moving together," with the hope of creating an inclusive learning space and encouraging a deeper understanding of peace and diversity.

Figure 1 illustrates the organizational structure of Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi), highlighting its decentralized and flexible management model. At the national level, the community is led by a National Coordinator, currently held by Lioni S. Beatrik, who oversees general strategic directions and supports regional development. Each regional chapter operates semi-independently under the guidance of a Regional Coordinator; in Bandung, this role is held by Fanny S. Alam. The coordinator supervises two main components: Facilitators and Members. Facilitators are responsible for curriculum design, organizing events, preparing learning materials, and identifying speakers. Meanwhile, members are categorized into regular participants of weekly classes and those managing Sekodi's digital platforms. This structure reflects Sekodi's commitment to participatory and inclusive governance, enabling flexibility, openness, and shared responsibility in promoting interfaith tolerance and social harmony.

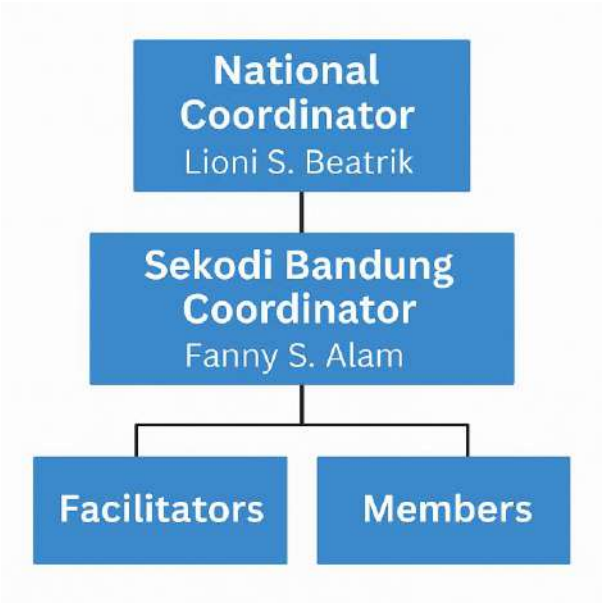

Figure 1. Organisation structure of Sekodi

Sekodi's organizational structure is flexible, not following a formal organizational model. The community is led by a national coordinator who oversees the community as a whole and guides regional coordinators in different regions. Regional coordinators are responsible for the management of community activities in each city. In Bandung, the leadership is held by Fanny Syariful Alam, who coordinates the facilitators and members.

Facilitators play an important role in running various programs, from compiling the annual curriculum, preparing learning materials, running events, to finding relevant resource persons. Currently, Sekodi Bandung has around 10-15 active facilitators. In addition, the community has two categories of members: social media members who manage the community's official accounts and regular members who regularly attend weekly classes. The membership system in Sekodi is voluntary and non-binding for a certain period of time, allowing flexibility for members to contribute according to their time and capacity. The community emphasizes the value of being safe, comfortable, and open, where every individual is accepted without discrimination based on cultural background, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

> "...The Sekodi community does not have an organizational structure like other communities where there is a chairperson, treasurer or secretary of all kinds. The Sekodi community itself is open to the public, whether it's teenagers, school children, or even mothers or fathers who are interested in our community are allowed to join our community. The Sekodi community always opens recruitment every year and shares it on Instagram..." (Interview, February 26, 2025).

Figure 2. Open Recruitment
Source: Sekodi Community Instagram

Figure 2 showcases the open recruitment announcement for Sekodi Bandung Batch #5, which is scheduled from 1st to 31st July 2024. This visually engaging poster is designed to invite diverse participants to join Sekodi, a youth-led interfaith peace community. The poster highlights the

inclusive nature of the organization, stating that the recruitment is open to all genders and age groups, especially those who are interested in issues of peace, tolerance, and pluralism. The central message encourages youth residing in Bandung City to take part in this initiative. It includes a QR code linked to the registration form and a short URL for easy access. The visual elements—such as interfaith and peace symbols, and a group of young people in dialogue—emphasize the spirit of openness, diversity, and constructive dialogue that defines Sekodi's mission.

The recruitment process for Sekodi members is conducted annually through social media, especially Instagram. Open recruitment is usually opened in July or August, as confirmed by members of the Sekodi community:

> "…Before classes start in August, prospective members are usually asked to fill out an interest form first. Besides being a participant, there are also opportunities to become a facilitator. They help manage the class and keep the discussion going. Facilitators are chosen from members who are active, already understand the material, and have participated in training as well. Some were previously active in other organizations, so they can bring a new perspective. As long as they are still enthusiastic and willing to contribute, they can continue to be facilitators. So, as the community grows, the number of facilitators also increases…" (Interview, February 26, 2025).

To better illustrate how Sekodi operates on an organizational level, Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the key positions within the community. It outlines the number of individuals in each role and their respective responsibilities, all of which are essential for supporting the community's mission and ensuring effective coordination in program implementation.

Table 1. Sekodi Organizational Structure and Its Duties

Position	Number of people	Main Duties
National Cordinator	1	Oversees all regional branches
Bandung Regional Coordinator	1	Manages the community in Bandung
Facilitator	10-15	Designs and implements programs

Reguler Member	40	Participates regularly every Saturday
Sosial Media Member	5	Manages Sekodi's social media accounts

According to Table 1, Sekodi's current organizational structure consists of several levels of positions with different but mutually supportive roles and responsibilities. At the highest level, there is a one-person National Coordinator. His main task is to oversee all of Sekodi's regional branches so that they remain aligned with the vision and mission of the organization as a whole. Below that, there is the Bandung Regional Coordinator, also one person, who is responsible for managing the Sekodi community based in Bandung, including ensuring activities run smoothly in the region. Facilitators, numbering between 10 to 15 people, play an important role in designing and running community programs, ranging from trainings to weekly discussions. They are the main drivers of field activities. Meanwhile, regular members, numbering around 40, regularly participate in community activities, especially those held every Saturday. Their presence is a strong foundation for the sustainability of this community. In addition, there are also social media members consisting of 5 people. They have specific responsibilities to manage Sekodi's social media accounts, disseminate information, and build a positive image of the community in the digital space. Attendance at each class session is flexible and not always full. Sekodi opens its classes to the public, so anyone interested in the topics discussed can participate in the learning. As a token of appreciation, regular members get early access to class information and the opportunity to represent Sekodi in discussions, seminars, or events from other organizations. With a volunteer-based, inclusive, and flexible approach, Sekodi continues to strive to be a platform for young people to learn and understand the values of diversity and peace in society (Hardiyanto, 2022).

Sekodi is committed to the principles of safety, comfort, and openness, and upholds the value of inclusivity without discrimination on the basis of religion, gender, culture, or sexual orientation. The learning space is designed so that every individual can feel accepted and free to express their opinions. Activities such as the Religious Encounter Class, Gender and Sexuality Class, and Politics and Democracy Class demonstrate the community's focus on building interfaith awareness and democratic values. From the results of field

observations and in-depth interviews with members and facilitators, several consistent patterns were found to describe the internal dynamics of the Indonesian Peace School Community (Sekodi). First, the flexible and volunteer-based organizational structure is the main strength of this community. This flexibility provides a comfortable and inclusive participation space for anyone without bureaucratic pressure, allowing for more organic and voluntary involvement. Second, the active participation of the younger generation is very prominent, as evidenced by their enthusiasm for participating in weekly classes and public discussion activities. These classes are not one-way instructive, but rather dialogic and participatory, allowing participants to learn from each other, exchange experiences, and build understanding across differences reflectively. Third, the educational methods used by Sekodi encourage the internalization of tolerance values naturally through the process of dialogue, experience, and cross-identity interaction. Fourth, the use of social media has proven to be an effective strategy to expand the reach of messages of peace and diversity carried by the community. Social media is not only a promotional tool, but also a place to build alternative narratives that emphasize the importance of living together in diversity. These patterns reflect Sekodi's success in forming an inclusive and transformative social learning space in the midst of a multicultural urban society like Bandung.

This finding shows that the non-formal community-based tolerance education model such as the Indonesian Peace School (Sekodi) has high effectiveness in forming awareness of diversity in the younger generation organically and sustainably. This shows that participatory education strategies that prioritize dialogue, direct experience, and critical reflection have a real contribution to internalizing tolerance values. This finding is in line with Max Weber's theory of social action which emphasizes that meaningful social action occurs when individuals act based on subjective understanding of social reality in this context, the act of learning together across faiths and experiences of diversity (Webber, 2001).

2. Indonesian Peace School Activity Program for the Young Generation

Sekodi has developed a structured main curriculum comprising routine class activities designed not merely to instill tolerance, but to cultivate a deeper acceptance of differences and diversity. The ultimate goal is to foster

empathy and social sensitivity, enabling participants to engage in inclusive interaction without discrimination across religious, cultural, or social backgrounds. The core components of this curriculum are described as follows:

a) Interfaith Encounter Class

Understanding religious and cultural diversity requires more than theoretical knowledge; it demands direct and meaningful experience. This foundational principle guides the Interfaith Encounter Class, in which participants engage with the spiritual lives of diverse communities through visits to places of worship and open dialogue sessions. As illustrated in Figure 3, participants visited the Eden Church, where they observed Christian worship practices firsthand and engaged in meaningful discussions with church members.

The class seeks to dismantle the imagined boundaries between “us” and “them” by facilitating direct conversations and reflective encounters. One such moment occurred when an Ustadz from the Ahmadiyya community explained that Ahmadiyah shares essential Islamic practices, including prayers and scriptures, with other Muslim groups. This helped clarify misconceptions and highlighted the shared foundations of different faith expressions. These moments of engagement often lead to questions about the meaning of religious symbols—such as the cross, as seen during the church visit—and critical discussions on why certain communities, like Ahmadiyah or minority Christian groups, face rejection in some places but acceptance in others.

Figure 5 shows participants engaged in a religious encounter meditation session, where the focus shifted from intellectual understanding to experiential spiritual reflection. Meanwhile, Figure 6 captures the City Tour Religious Encounter, where participants explored various houses of worship across Bandung, providing them with a broader perspective on religious coexistence in urban contexts.

Figure 3. Religious encounter class at Eden Church
Source: Personal Document

Figure 4. Religious meeting class at Ahmadiyah Mosque
Source: Personal Document

Figure 5. Religious Encounter Meditation Class
Source: Community Media

Figure 6. City Tour Religious Encounter Class
Source: Community Document

A participant reflected on the experience by stating:

> "…In this class I learned that religious differences should not be a source of conflict, but rather an opportunity for mutual understanding and respect. Discussions with friends of different beliefs made me realize the importance of empathy and equal dialogue. I also became more aware that tolerance is not enough to just be silent, but must be actively involved in building a shared space…" (Interview, November 16, 2024)

This class involves many parties, from religious leaders, managers of places of worship, to local communities that open up dialogue spaces for

participants. The facilitator from Sekodi acts as a liaison between the resource person and the participants, the Sekodi facilitator is also not only a moderator but also a companion who handles questions from members who are sensitive so that they remain comfortable to discuss and the facilitator is also tasked with ensuring that the discussion remains inclusive and comfortable. Participants come from very diverse backgrounds, students, interfaith youth, social workers, to the general public who are interested in learning directly about tolerance.

In addition, minority religious communities such as Ahmadiyah, believers, and Christian communities are specifically invited to share their experiences as groups that often receive social stigma. This program is usually run in November for four consecutive weeks, every Saturday, with a schedule that is arranged well in advance so that participants can prepare themselves. The location of the class moves according to the community visited, starting from churches, temples, community mosques, to believers' paswakan. Each session lasts about 2-3 hours and is divided into two main parts, an introduction and observation session for places of worship, then a reflective discussion, participants or community members are given time to ask questions and discuss issues raised in the theme. Usually the class starts at 10 am to 1 pm, but after the class is finished, participants and the facilitators, the religious leaders who are present always discuss and the discussion sometimes exceeds the specified time because the open community school makes it easy for someone to tell or discuss sensitive matters.

From this presentation, it can be concluded that the Interfaith Encounter Class is an effective space in breaking down distances and prejudices between religious communities. The direct experience-based approach through visits to places of worship and open dialogue provides participants with a deep understanding, not only of the teachings of other religions, but also the social realities faced by minority communities. In general, this class shows that real interaction and reflective dialogue can foster empathy and form an attitude of tolerance organically among the younger generation.

b) Gender and Sexuality Class

The Gender and Sexuality Class was held at the LBH Bandung location where the Sekolah Damai Indonesia community collaborated with LBH

Bandung. The materials discussed included an introduction to SOGIESC Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics, sexuality, women's issues, and various forms of violence and discrimination. Although this class looks like a seminar, the Gender and Sexuality Class is designed with an atmosphere that is far from formal. This activity begins with a presentation of material from a resource person, usually an academic or Gender activist, who explains basic concepts about gender, sexuality, and related legal issues, such as the protection of constitutional rights based on the 1945 Constitution. However, after the initial presentation session, the atmosphere becomes more interactive. Participants are invited to discuss in small groups, dissecting articles in the constitution related to the right to feel safe, protection from discrimination, and the right to live as a citizen. Some groups discuss the real experiences of sexual minority groups who are often overlooked in the legal system, while other groups analyze how gender narratives are shaped by the media and education. These Q&A sessions and group discussions transform the classroom into more than just a learning space; it becomes a place to exchange perspectives, listen to each other, and uncover deeply held prejudices.

Gender Class offers a learning space that aims to raise participants' critical awareness of social constructions related to gender identity, power relations, and structural injustice. In this class, participants are invited to reflect on their daily life experiences, unravel biases that may not be realized, and understand the struggle for equality that is still ongoing today. Through discussions, case studies, and exchange of experiences, this class not only touches on the academic realm, but also inspires the personal. This was emphasized by one of the participants who attended the Gender class

> "…I learned that gender issues are not just about women, but also about all people, men, women, and other identities. This class made me aware of structural injustices that are often invisible, especially in culture and tradition. I also learned to recognize the privileges I have and how to use them to support equality…" (Interview, February 22, 2025)

The Gender and Sexuality Class is facilitated by individuals from diverse and complementary backgrounds. The primary facilitator comes from within the Sekodi community and is responsible for maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment. To enrich the sessions, Sekodi collaborates with external speakers—including academics specialising in

gender studies and law, as well as advocates for survivors of gender-based violence. In the context of this study, resource persons were drawn from various organisations such as WSC UIN Bandung, Serikandi Pasundan, and LBH Bandung. Participants include both general members of the public and individuals affiliated with gender and human rights advocacy groups.

This class is designed to address gender and sexuality issues in a broad and intersectional manner. It responds to the reality that definitions of gender and sexuality are frequently misrepresented—sometimes strategically—for political or ideological agendas. Such distortions contribute to intolerance and the marginalisation of individuals with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Accordingly, the class seeks to challenge these misconceptions and dismantle harmful prejudices by fostering critical understanding and empathy through open dialogue.

As shown in Figure 8, the Gender and Sexuality Class typically takes place in informal, inclusive spaces such as cafes, public parks, or community venues. It is conducted over four consecutive Saturdays in January, with each session lasting approximately three hours (10:00–13:00). The choice of venue is intentional, aiming to promote comfort and openness for participants to engage in meaningful conversation.

Figure 7. Gender and Sexuality Class
Source: Personal Documentation

Figure 8. Gender and Sexuality Class
Source: Personal Documentation

Through group discussions, case studies, and personal reflection, the class goes beyond academic theory to cultivate critical awareness of social justice and human rights issues. The program has proven effective in creating a safe and inclusive space for dialogue, allowing participants to confront bias and build solidarity across different identities and experiences. Overall, Figure 8 illustrates not only the participatory nature of this class but also the inclusive atmosphere that characterises Sekodi's broader approach to peace and tolerance education.

c) Political Class and Democracy

The Political Class and Democracy program invites participants to critically examine the relationship between the state and its citizens through the lenses of civil rights, political participation, and the democratic process in Indonesia. The course begins with foundational materials on the structure of the state and the concept of substantial democracy, then transitions into discussions on pressing political issues such as the criminalisation of activists, elitist electoral systems, and the lack of legal protection for vulnerable groups.

As shown in Figure 9, one of the class sessions featured a dialogue with a Deputy of the Bandung City DPRD (Regional People's Representative Council), where participants directly engaged with a policymaker on the realities of local governance. The interactive format of this class allows participants to not only analyse constitutional articles that are frequently violated in practice but also to dissect case studies of human rights abuses from a policy and legal perspective.

In this class, participants do more than learn theory—they engage in advocacy simulations, construct public arguments, and conduct mock parliamentary debates. These activities are designed to empower participants as active citizens who understand their democratic rights and responsibilities. The transformative nature of this program is reinforced by participant testimonials, such as one who stated:

> "The most interesting thing is how politics is not only about power, but also about narrative, identity, and how public policy is formed. This class helped me see the relationship between ideology, power, and everyday

life practices. I also became more critical of political information on social media…" (Interview, February 26, 2025).

Figure 10 captures another session of the Political Class in progress, depicting the dynamic and participatory atmosphere that characterises the Sekodi learning model. These sessions are conducted in collaboration with legal experts, democracy activists, members of the DPRD, and academics with expertise in constitutional law and civic engagement. In one session, for instance, DPRD expert staff explained the legislative drafting process, which was followed by discussions highlighting representation disparities in the Indonesian parliament.

Classes are held every Saturday throughout February, with four consecutive sessions. Each session lasts approximately three hours and is structured into three segments: presentation, open discussion, and advocacy or reflection activities. Venues for these sessions vary between LBH Bandung, community discussion halls, and other civil society partner spaces, all chosen to foster openness and accessibility.

Figure 9. Political Class with Bandung City DPRD Deputy
Source: Community Document

Figure 10. Political Class
Source: Community Document

This class serves as a strategic space for strengthening democratic awareness among youth. Through the study of constitutional frameworks, human rights discourse, and participatory exercises, participants are equipped not only with theoretical understanding but also with practical skills in ethical political engagement. Ultimately, the Political Class and Democracy program demonstrates how civic education—when conducted in

inclusive and dialogic settings—can effectively cultivate critical, empowered, and socially responsible young citizens.

d) Additional Classes

Additional programs are designed to complement Sekodi's main classes, with themes that are more flexible and responsive to emerging social issues. The material raised can change every year, depending on the needs of the community and social dynamics. Topics that have been discussed include media literacy, narratives of violence in the news, strengthening marginalized communities, social ecology, and non-violent communication practices. The goal is to broaden participants' awareness of issues that are often overlooked in formal education spaces. This activity not only offers new knowledge, but also exploratory experiences such as book discussions, city history tours, watching documentaries together, and direct reflections from the field. The format is not rigid and is very contextual, making each meeting unique and always connected to the daily lives of participants.

The Insertion Program is held from March to April, usually twice a month on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. The duration of each activity is between two and four hours, depending on the form of the activity. Book or film discussions are usually held in community spaces or public libraries, while history tours or field reflections are carried out directly at points in the city that are relevant to the theme. The activity schedule is distributed via Sekodi's social media, and is open to the public without strict selection. Flexibility is the keyword of this program both in terms of place, theme, and delivery method. Precisely because it is not tied to a fixed curriculum, this program becomes the most fluid and surprising learning space among all Sekodi activities.

This class is an additional program that discusses social issues that are currently being discussed, such as media literacy, communication, marginalized groups, and other social topics. This class aims to enrich participants' insights with new perspectives and sharpen their understanding of the main curriculum. The learning methods in this class are more diverse and flexible, such as city tours, museum visits, discussions in parks, events in libraries, book discussions, and other interactive methods. The speakers in this class are academics, practitioners, and activists who are relevant to the topics discussed. The participants who attended were the

general public, students, and members of SEKODI Bandung. In general, the Insert Program proves the importance of non-formal learning spaces that are fluid and responsive to social dynamics. The flexibility of themes and learning methods makes this program not only a complement to the main curriculum, but also a catalyst for expanding participants' critical awareness. From this presentation, it can be concluded that contextual learning through direct experience and open discussion can strengthen participants' understanding of social issues in depth and reflectively.

Each class held by SEKODI Bandung follows a systematic and interactive format to ensure participants get the optimal learning experience. The activity begins with an opening, guided by a facilitator or regional coordinator to provide an overview of the objectives and agenda of the class. After that, introductions are made between participants and speakers, creating a more intimate and inclusive atmosphere. Next, the presentation session becomes the main part where the resource person shares insight and in-depth perspectives according to the class theme. Participants are then given the opportunity to participate in a question and answer session, where they can clarify their understanding, dig deeper for information, and discuss issues relevant to the material presented. To enrich the learning experience, the activity ends with an interactive discussion, which is more relaxed and allows participants to express their views and share experiences openly. With this inclusive and dynamic format, SEKODI classes are not only a means of education but also a space for dialogue that encourages a deep understanding of diversity, inclusivity, and democratic values in social life.

> "This class really opened my eyes to religious diversity and the realities faced by other religious communities. Through the discussions and materials provided, I increasingly understood the importance of mutual respect and appreciation for differences. I felt more open to seeing different religious perspectives, and more concerned about the issues faced by minority religious groups. This experience taught me to be more tolerant and inclusive in my daily life, so that I can contribute to creating a more harmonious and understanding society." (Interview, January 25, 2025).

Sekodi holds weekly classes aimed at increasing the understanding and empathy of the younger generation towards gender and sexuality issues, as well as politics and democracy and religious issues. Sekodi has various

excellent programs, such as the Religious Encounter Class which allows participants to understand the teachings of other religions through visits to places of worship and interactive discussions, the Gender and Sexuality Class which aims to break down stigma and discrimination against groups with diverse gender identities, and the Politics and Democracy Class which provides an in-depth understanding of human rights and the dynamics of Indonesian politics. In addition, there is the Insert Program which discusses current social issues, such as media literacy and city tours to understand social conflicts directly. With a volunteer-based membership system, Sekodi creates a safe, comfortable, and inclusive environment without discrimination based on religious, cultural, or gender background. Through a flexible and collaborative approach, Sekodi seeks to build awareness and tolerance among young people in order to create a harmonious and peaceful society. The implementation of this program shows various interesting tendencies in participant responses. Activities based on direct interaction, such as visits to places of worship and interfaith dialogues, received high appreciation because they provided real experiences in understanding diversity. Participants feel more emotionally and intellectually connected when they can have direct dialogue with communities from different backgrounds, so that their understanding of pluralism deepens. In addition, classes that discuss sensitive issues, especially those related to gender and sexuality, are one of the main attractions. Many participants are interested in exploring this topic more deeply because there are still many prejudices and misunderstandings in society. By presenting academics, practitioners, and activists as speakers, this class provides broader insights and opens up space for critical and constructive discussions.

The Insertion Program also has a significant impact in responding to developing social issues. With its flexible and thematic nature, this program can adapt to the needs of the community and present discussions that are relevant to current social dynamics. Various learning methods, such as city tours, book discussions, and museum visits, make this program more interesting and not monotonous for participants. Flexibility in implementing the program is one of the main factors that makes participants more enthusiastic and actively involved. By not limiting activities in a format that is too formal, participants feel more comfortable in discussing and sharing perspectives. Inclusive learning spaces, such as cafes, parks, or libraries, also

contribute to creating a more relaxed and interactive atmosphere. The combination of in-depth delivery of material, active participation, and a dynamic learning environment make this program effective in building social awareness, strengthening inclusive attitudes, and encouraging participants' involvement in various community issues.

To further illustrate the scope, structure, and inclusivity of Sekodi's educational programs, Table 2 provides a clear summary of the main activities conducted by the Indonesian Peace School Community in Bandung. The table outlines the frequency, location, and target participants of each program—ranging from interfaith dialogues and gender discussions to political literacy and flexible additional classes. This overview highlights the intentional diversity in both content and setting, underscoring Sekodi's commitment to making education accessible, responsive, and grounded in the lived realities of its participants.

Table 2. Indonesian Peace School Community Program Bandung

Activity Name	Frequency	Location	Participants
Interfaith Encounters	Weekly, 4 times	Place of Workshop	General Public
Gender and Sexuality	Weekly, 4 times	Cafes, Parks	Academics, University Students
Politics and Democracy	Weekly, 4 times	Bandung Legal Aid Office (LBH)	Students, Activists
Additional Classes	Flexible / Incidental	Public Spaces	Members of Sekodi Community

As illustrated in Table 2, Sekodi organizes a variety of thematic classes in diverse public and community spaces, targeting different segments of society—from students and academics to activists and the general public. These programs, including the Interfaith Encounter, Gender and Sexuality, Politics and Democracy, and Additional Classes, demonstrate Sekodi's flexible and inclusive approach to non-formal education. The frequency and location of these classes reflect not only logistical accessibility but also a deliberate pedagogical strategy to embed learning within the lived environments of

participants. By holding sessions in places such as cafes, parks, legal aid offices, and public libraries, Sekodi ensures that the learning process remains grounded, relatable, and socially embedded. The variety and responsiveness of these programs highlight Sekodi's commitment to creating contextual learning spaces that are aligned with the realities and needs of a multicultural urban society.

These findings indicate that an approach to tolerance education based on direct experience and interaction between individuals is more effective than one-way methods such as lectures. The participatory strategy implemented by Sekodi is in line with Max Weber's theory of social action, where individual actions are influenced by social meanings formed through interaction (Webber, 2001). In addition, this approach also reflects the spirit of dialogical education as developed by Paulo Freire, which emphasizes the importance of critical involvement of participants in the learning process. In line with Wahyu Purwaningsih's research (Purwaningsih, 2025). The existence of interfaith communities such as Sekodi is able to create a safe space to discuss sensitive and complex issues. Sekodi programs have proven to have a significant impact on changing the attitudes of participants, especially the younger generation, in building more inclusive social relations. Thus, Sekodi can be a model of tolerance education that can be replicated in other regions. However, challenges remain, such as limited participation from less representative groups and minimal support from formal institutions. Therefore, collaboration with educational institutions and policy makers needs to be strengthened so that the sustainability of the program can be maintained and expanded.

3. Impacts and Challenges Faced by the Indonesian Peace School Community in Promoting Religious Tolerance

Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) programs have had a real impact on changing the attitudes of the younger generation in understanding tolerance and diversity. Activities such as interfaith dialog classes, gender and sexuality discussions, and democracy education, have successfully created an inclusive learning space. One of the participants stated:

> "...In my opinion, the Sekodi Program really helps to increase tolerance. I used to be really awkward when I had to talk or discuss with people of different religions, afraid of saying the wrong thing or not connecting. But

after participating in a few sessions, I got used to it and now I feel really comfortable. I became more open to hearing other people's perspectives without immediately judging. The friends in this community are also cool, they respect each other's differences, so the discussion is more enjoyable and less heated..." (Interview, February 15, 2025)

From the organizer's side, the challenges are admittedly quite complex, one of the facilitators mentioned:

"Our community definitely faces some complex challenges, one of which is the different views of diverse cultural backgrounds that sometimes trigger social misunderstandings. In addition, Sekodi Community suffers from a lack of resources, both in terms of funding and volunteer labor. We are a community that focuses on social issues, despite our humble origins. It can be said that Komunitas Sekodi is a 'poor community' that is committed to continuing to organize studies, regardless of whether there is funding or not. This community is purely engaged in literacy, with the aim of building public awareness regarding issues of religious freedom. However, our focus is not limited to these issues. We also discuss various other topics, such as politics, law, culture, and other social aspects. Apart from these challenges, the biggest challenge we face is also the consistency of the team, because it is often difficult for these voluntary members to remain active." (Interview, February 22, 2025).

Table 3. Thematic Findings on the Impact and Challenges of the Secretariat in Promoting Religious Tolerance

Aspect	Key Findings
Participant Attitude Shift	Greater openness; participants overcome anxiety in interfaith dialogue.
Internal Challenges	Limited funding, inconsistent volunteerism, and cultural misalignment.
Learning Spaces	Non-formal venues such as cafés, parks, and *LBH* (legal aid offices) foster inclusive and comfortable dialogue.
Communication Medium	Social media is a powerful tool for narrative-building and community outreach.

Table 3 Confirm that Sekodi's strategy of combining experiential learning with a participatory atmosphere plays a critical role in reducing social distance and transforming youth perceptions of religious 'others'. Non-formal

learning environments offer a level of psychological safety that encourages participants to speak freely, engage critically, and build empathy—elements often missing in formal education.

The Sekodi program encourages changes in participants' attitudes towards diversity, especially in terms of religion, gender, and the role of citizens in democracy. However, the program also faces major challenges such as limited funding, inconsistent volunteers, and uneven community participation, especially from minority groups. This requires Sekodi to develop a more strategic and collaborative approach so that its impact can be widespread.

From observations and interviews, it appears that experiential approaches such as house of worship visits are very effective in shaping participants' empathy and understanding. Discussions on sensitive issues such as gender and politics also trigger active engagement as there have not been many safe spaces to discuss them. In addition, non-formal learning spaces such as parks or cafes make participants feel more free to express their opinions. Meanwhile, social media became an important tool to reach out to new participants and spread the peaceful narrative widely. These patterns show that participatory, fluid and reflective learning methods are preferred by the younger generation over formal approaches.

The Sekodi community faces significant challenges, including limited funds, cultural differences, and lack of community participation. The issue of limited funds limits Sekodi's ability to develop sustainable programs and expand to a wider area. On the other hand, differences in cultural and religious views can lead to misunderstandings that hinder collaboration and dialog among its members. Lack of community participation, especially from the younger generation, is also an obstacle to building a strong network and creating a more meaningful impact in the community. To overcome these challenges, Sekodi seeks to establish partnerships with donor agencies, the government, and the private sector to secure more stable sources of funding. In addition, establishing an inclusive and open dialog is essential to diffuse differences in views. Educational programs and leadership training are also expected to increase the involvement of the younger generation as agents of change. With the right approach, Sekodi has the potential to continue to grow

as a platform that brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, while creating a safe, inclusive and empowering space for all.

The findings support Max Weber's social action theory that individuals act based on subjective meanings and values that they consider important. Sekodi participants engage in activities not out of obligation, but out of a sense of personal values towards tolerance and social justice (rational-value-oriented action). Sekodi activities also reflect affective action, when participants are emotionally connected to the experiences of other groups. In addition, John Locke's concept of tolerance regarding the protection of religious freedom is also evident in the safe and open discussion space. These findings enrich the understanding that non-formal volunteer communities such as Sekodi have great potential in building a tolerant society through alternative education methods that are more dialogic and based on direct experience.

Discussion: Experiential and Dialogical Learning as a Foundation for Tolerance

This study investigates the role of Sekolah Damai Indonesia (Sekodi) Bandung in promoting religious tolerance through non-formal, volunteer-based education that emphasizes direct experience and participatory dialogue. By analyzing Sekodi's flagship programs—such as the Interfaith Encounter Class, Gender and Sexuality Class, and Political and Democracy Class—the research finds that these initiatives have significantly influenced the attitudes and awareness of participants, particularly youth, in embracing diversity, breaking down prejudice, and fostering inclusive social interactions.

The findings show that Sekodi's flexible structure, inclusive learning environments, and contextual learning methods have contributed to creating a safe space for discussion on sensitive social issues. Participants reported increased empathy, openness to other perspectives, and deeper critical understanding of pluralism. Additionally, the use of informal public spaces and digital platforms has expanded the reach and accessibility of the programs. Despite challenges such as limited funding and inconsistent volunteer participation, Sekodi proves to be an effective model for grassroots tolerance education in multicultural urban settings like Bandung.

The effectiveness of Sekodi's educational programs in fostering tolerance and inclusivity can be explained by the way the community integrates experiential learning with meaningful social interaction. Participants do not merely receive information passively; they engage directly with people of different faiths, identities, and perspectives through structured encounters and open dialogues. This process allows them to attach personal meaning to the experiences they undergo—whether by visiting places of worship, discussing gender injustice, or engaging in political debate—which strengthens their internalization of tolerance values. This dynamic is in line with Max Weber's theory of social action, which posits that human behavior is shaped not only by external norms but by subjective meanings that individuals construct through social engagement (Weber, 1978). In the context of Sekodi, participants' actions—such as actively listening to minority voices or confronting their own biases—are driven by these self-constructed values, resulting in more authentic, sustained attitudinal change.

Moreover, the structure and methods used by Sekodi align with John Dewey's theory of experiential learning, which emphasizes that true education occurs when learners actively engage with their environment, reflect on their experiences, and apply insights to real-life contexts (Dewey, 1938). Sekodi's informal learning spaces—parks, libraries, cafés—serve as accessible environments where participants can learn by doing, interactively and reflexively. This creates a learning process that is democratic, non-hierarchical, and deeply connected to participants' everyday realities. Dewey argued that such learning fosters critical thinking, social awareness, and moral growth, all of which are evident in Sekodi's impact on its participants. Thus, the research findings can be explained by the interplay between subjective meaning-making (Weber) and experiential reflection (Dewey)—two frameworks that together illuminate why Sekodi's approach successfully cultivates tolerance and empathy among urban youth.

The findings of this study both affirm and expand upon previous research on the promotion of religious tolerance, particularly when compared to the three dominant approaches in the literature: (1) the formal religious community-based approach, (2) the formal education and curriculum-based approach, and (3) the cultural and local leadership-based approach. Each of these categories has offered valuable insights, yet each also leaves

unaddressed the growing need for more grassroots, experiential, and youth-centered models, particularly in complex urban settings.

In the first category, studies by Anjani and Kosasih (Anjani & Kosasih, 2024), Muslem (Muslem, 2023), and Williams (Williams, 2023) emphasize the top-down role of religious elites and formal institutions in managing religious conflict and fostering harmony. These efforts include interfaith councils, dakwah campaigns, and mediation by religious figures. While such interventions are undoubtedly important, they often operate within rigid institutional frameworks that limit organic engagement with pluralism—especially among youth. In contrast, Sekodi operates from the bottom up, relying on volunteers and peer-to-peer interaction, allowing for more personalized and affective learning experiences. This distinction marks a significant departure from the dominant reliance on elite leadership, offering a model where the promotion of tolerance is decentralized, participatory, and sustained through lived experience rather than institutional authority.

The second body of literature—focusing on schools and curriculum—has largely highlighted the role of civic education (Lestari, 2023; Ruslana, 2022), and language instruction (Atamturk, 2018) in instilling democratic and tolerant values. However, as many of these studies note, formal education environments tend to be structured, normative, and limited to classroom settings, often unable to address the real-world complexities of religious diversity and social conflict. Sekodi addresses this gap by engaging youth outside the classroom, using public and informal spaces such as parks, places of worship, cafés, and libraries to facilitate interactive learning. The novelty lies in Sekodi's ability to mobilize critical consciousness through dialogue and real-time experiences—something rarely achieved within curriculum-bound frameworks.

Third, studies in the cultural and local leadership approach—such as those by Arsal et al. (Arsal et al., 2023), Alfitri and Hambali (Alfitri & Hambali, 2013), and Muda and Suharyanto (2020)—demonstrate how traditional rituals, community norms, and indigenous leadership structures help preserve harmony in rural and homogenous societies. While rich in cultural wisdom, these models often remain bound to local customs and may not fully address the diversity, social mobility, and ideological tensions of urban youth communities. Sekodi, by contrast, operates in a multicultural, pluralistic

urban environment where identities are fluid and ideological contestation is more intense. The community's approach, grounded in interfaith encounters, gender discourse, and political education, introduces a more intersectional and contemporary engagement with diversity, while still honoring cultural context.

This research contributes a novel hybrid model that integrates the strengths of existing approaches—namely, the authority of religious actors, the structure of educational systems, and the wisdom of local traditions—into a flexible, youth-led, dialogical, and experience-based format. The originality of the Sekodi model lies in its capacity to translate tolerance from abstract values into embodied practices, engaging the heart and mind of participants in everyday social contexts. This is a critical innovation in contemporary peace education, especially in societies like Indonesia where religious and cultural plurality intersects with political fragmentation and social inequality.

In the context of this study, the development of religious tolerance through Sekodi's educational approach reveals significant social implications: namely, that tolerance grows most effectively through direct experience and dialogic social relations embedded in safe, inclusive community environments. Rather than relying solely on didactic instruction, Sekodi creates interactive spaces—such as parks, cafés, and public libraries—where young people encounter difference not as abstract concepts, but as lived realities. This reflects broader findings that inclusive, multifunctional public spaces play a crucial role in facilitating intergroup encounters, reducing social segregation, and fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect (Alfarizi et al., 2023; Francis et al., 2012). Through regular, open-ended dialogue sessions, Sekodi operationalizes what Onken et al. (2021) conceptualize as the Dialogue-Awareness-Tolerance (DAT) model, in which mutual recognition and discomfort are processed as part of critical engagement with difference. Additionally, Sekodi's model resonates with the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel, who emphasize the ethical imperative of openness to the "Other" as a foundation for genuine tolerance (Shypunov & Kovalchuk, 2021). In practice, Sekodi's emphasis on voluntary participation, empathetic storytelling, and mutual listening generates a participatory form of social learning where values of tolerance are not just taught, but actively co-constructed. This affirms the idea that socially situated, experiential learning in community-based settings is not

only feasible but essential for cultivating authentic, sustainable pluralism among youth in urban multicultural societies.

The ideological implications of this study underscore that deep transformation in individuals' belief systems—especially regarding tolerance and pluralism—is not primarily driven by formal doctrines or institutional indoctrination, but rather emerges through personal and reflective engagement with real-life diversity. Sekodi's approach exemplifies this process: by facilitating direct encounters with difference—whether in interfaith dialogue, gender discourse, or political discussions—participants are encouraged to critically reflect on their own assumptions and values. Such transformation aligns with findings from Bíró (2019) and Smith & Glenn (2016), who emphasize that non-formal learning environments and reflective practices lead to more enduring ideological shifts. Longitudinal research (Bowman et al., 2011; Castellanos & Cole, 2015) further supports this by showing that diversity experiences during youth have a long-term effect on civic engagement and social awareness. Ideological change, then, is rooted in the affective, dialogic, and experiential—highlighting that inclusive ideologies are best cultivated not through top-down teaching, but through bottom-up, lived encounters with human complexity. Sekodi's model thus contributes to a broader understanding of ideological formation as a dynamic, socially situated, and deeply human process.

The findings of this study carry significant historical implications, as they reflect a major shift in how young people in post-Reformasi Indonesia engage with civil society—moving away from formal institutions toward non-institutional and non-hierarchical spaces to explore identity, justice, and coexistence. This marks an evolution in civic participation where youth are actively creating and claiming alternative public, digital, and community-based spaces as platforms for expression and collective meaning-making. Prior research highlights that such spaces empower young people to challenge dominant narratives (Walker & Pennington, 2024), construct social identity through local contexts (Landolt, 2013), and foster a sense of belonging and cross-cultural solidarity (Habib & Ward, 2019). In this light, the Sekodi model is not merely a local initiative—it represents a broader historical trend in youth-led civic innovation. Its core contribution lies in demonstrating that democratization and social reconciliation are not solely

driven by state institutions or formal doctrines, but can be meaningfully cultivated from the ground up through inclusive, grassroots engagement.

The findings of this study affirm that community-based non-formal education, such as that practiced by Sekodi, can effectively complement—and even rival—traditional institutional approaches in fostering empathy, critical awareness, and social cohesion. Unlike conventional classroom settings, Sekodi's learning model engages participants through direct experience, peer interaction, and reflective dialogue in accessible public spaces. This aligns with the principles of community-based learning (Brown, 2024) and service-learning (Losada et al., 2019), both of which emphasize the value of experiential engagement in building civic responsibility and social empathy. Moreover, initiatives like Sekodi reflect broader trends in collaborative education programs that enhance diversity and inclusion (O'Connor, 2012), while strengthening local networks and promoting social unity (Olayinka & Deniran, 2024). By operating outside rigid institutional hierarchies and embracing equity-based frameworks (Cress & Stokamer, 2022), community-driven educational spaces enable youth to co-create meaning, challenge systemic inequities, and cultivate a sense of belonging. These outcomes not only advance the goals of sustainable development (Kurawa, 2021) but also suggest that grassroots educational models offer a vital alternative for shaping inclusive democratic societies.

Despite its innovative and inclusive approach, Sekodi's strong reliance on volunteers and informal infrastructure presents significant structural weaknesses that may hinder the program's long-term sustainability and scalability. Without institutional backing or stable funding, such grassroots initiatives are vulnerable to high volunteer attrition, limited organizational continuity, and restricted reach—especially in areas lacking strong civic networks. Research shows that the absence of clear frameworks and centralized structures can weaken program cohesion, as observed in cases like the Master Gardener Program and food assistance networks (Chalker-Scott & Tinnemore, 2009). Furthermore, studies on community health programs have consistently documented attrition rates of up to 53% among volunteers due to poor support and lack of incentives (Rajaa & Palanisamy, 2022). While community ownership and informality can encourage innovation and flexibility, sustainable impact ultimately requires structured training, financial planning, and integration into broader policy frameworks

(Bremer & Bhuiyan, 2014; Willness et al., 2023). Thus, Sekodi's model, though effective in the short term, risks stagnation without strategic institutional partnerships and long-term investment.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and broader impact of community-based educational models like Sekodi, several strategic actions are necessary. First, policymakers and educational institutions should formally recognize and support non-formal, community-driven learning spaces as legitimate and complementary forms of civic education. This recognition can be operationalized through policy frameworks that allocate resources—both financial and infrastructural—to support such grassroots initiatives. Second, capacity-building programs should be developed to equip volunteers and facilitators with essential pedagogical and organizational skills, reducing dependence on informal and inconsistent training. Third, strategic partnerships between community groups, local governments, and academic institutions can be fostered to provide mentorship, evaluation mechanisms, and access to wider networks of support. These collaborations would enable grassroots models to maintain their participatory and flexible nature while benefiting from institutional stability. Fourth, governments and funding bodies should establish grant schemes specifically targeting youth-led and volunteer-based initiatives that promote interreligious dialogue, social cohesion, and democratic participation. Finally, it is crucial to embed monitoring and accountability structures to evaluate the long-term social impact of such models, ensuring that they continue to serve as inclusive, dynamic, and transformative spaces for civic learning. By integrating these policy measures, community-based programs like Sekodi can move from being isolated experiments to scalable models of democratic education and peacebuilding.

Conclusion

The central finding of this study is that tolerance and pluralism are most effectively nurtured not through top-down directives or institutional curricula, but through community-based, experiential learning that is rooted in everyday social interactions. The Sekodi model demonstrates that when young people are given safe, dialogical, and inclusive spaces to engage directly with religious and ideological difference, they begin to internalize values of empathy, mutual respect, and critical awareness. This underscores

a key lesson: peace education must move beyond normative messaging toward participatory and affective practices that empower individuals to learn through experience and reflection. The significance of this finding lies in its affirmation that ideological transformation is not simply taught—it is lived.

This research contributes to the scientific discourse by offering an empirical case study that bridges the gap between theories of social action and educational practice in plural societies. Conceptually, it introduces a hybrid framework that integrates Max Weber's theory of social action with John Dewey's experiential learning model to explain how youth-driven community initiatives like Sekodi can foster deep ideological transformation. The study enriches existing literature by proposing "experiential pluralism" as a working concept—referring to the process by which pluralist values are cultivated through lived, reflective, and voluntary engagement with difference. Methodologically, the research expands the study of peace education beyond institutional contexts, highlighting the role of informal, non-hierarchical, and affective spaces in shaping democratic civic culture. It also raises new questions about the sustainability of volunteer-based models and the future of grassroots movements in polarized societies.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. It focuses primarily on a single case study, which may not fully represent the diversity of community-based educational initiatives across Indonesia or other pluralistic societies. The qualitative nature of the research also limits the generalizability of its findings, as it draws from a relatively small sample of participants and is shaped by contextual dynamics specific to the Bandung region. Furthermore, the study does not quantitatively measure long-term ideological changes or behavioral outcomes among participants—factors that could provide deeper insights into the model's overall impact. Future research should consider conducting comparative analyses across various community education models, employing longitudinal designs to assess sustained effects, and exploring how such models can be integrated into broader institutional and policy frameworks to improve scalability and sustainability.

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Textual Distortion in Hadith Transmission: A Critical Philological Analysis of Tashīf and Taḥrīf in Islamic Manuscript Tradition

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji fenomena *tashīf* (kesalahan tulis) dan *taḥrīf* (distorsi makna) dalam manuskrip Arab klasik, khususnya dalam transmisi teks hadis, sebagai kategori analitis mandiri dalam kajian filologi Arab. Tujuan penelitian ini dilandasi oleh minimnya kajian yang secara khusus menyoroti kedua fenomena ini, meskipun keduanya memiliki signifikansi epistemologis dan historis dalam tradisi keilmuan Islam. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif yang berakar pada sumber filologis klasik dan teori kritis kontemporer, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data dari teks-teks hadis primer dan syarahnya melalui teknik dokumentasi dan analisis isi. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas kesalahan teks terjadi karena kemiripan bentuk huruf Arab serta tidak adanya tanda baca (titik) pada manuskrip awal, yang sering kali menyebabkan distorsi makna dan memengaruhi kredibilitas perawi. Penelitian ini juga menekankan bahwa *tashīf* dan *taḥrīf* tetap relevan dalam konteks modern, terutama dalam praktik penyuntingan manuskrip dan penafsiran teologis. Fenomena ini memiliki implikasi penting bagi pelestarian keaslian teks, pemahaman terhadap pergeseran ideologi, dan pengembangan metode filologi kritis. Keaslian penelitian ini terletak pada integrasinya antara kajian keislaman klasik dan teori filologi kritis—khususnya gagasan Bernard Cerquiglini tentang keragaman teks—sehingga menawarkan kerangka baru untuk meninjau ulang dinamika otoritas teks dan pluralisme penafsiran dalam studi Islam.

Kata Kunci: filologi Arab; distorsi teks; transmisi hadis; filologi kritis.

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the phenomena of *tashīf* (scribal error) and *taḥrīf* (textual distortion) in classical Arabic manuscripts, particularly in the transmission of ḥadīth texts, as independent analytical categories within Arabic philology. Motivated by the scarcity of focused studies on these textual deviations, the research highlights their epistemological significance and role in shaping Islamic intellectual tradition. Employing a qualitative-descriptive approach grounded in classical philological sources and contemporary critical theory, this study draws data from primary hadith texts and their commentaries through documentation and content analysis methods. The findings reveal that most errors stem from the visual similarity of Arabic letters and the absence of diacritical marks in early scripts, which often lead to semantic distortions and affect the credibility of transmitters. The study also illustrates the ongoing relevance of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* in both classical and modern contexts, including manuscript editing and theological interpretation. These phenomena have significant implications for preserving textual authenticity, understanding ideological shifts, and developing critical philological methods. The originality of this research lies in its integration of classical Islamic studies with critical philology—particularly Bernard Cerquiglini's theory of textual variance—offering a novel framework to reexamine the dynamics of textual authority and interpretive pluralism in Islamic scholarship.

Keywords: *Arabic philology; textual distortion; hadith transmission; critical philology*.

Introduction

The rapid development of science and technology today has had a significant impact on how Muslims understand religious texts, particularly the Qur'an and Hadith. In the context of globalisation and digitalisation, the dissemination of Islamic texts across various languages and media often results in unintended shifts in meaning. One of the critical challenges arising from this phenomenon is the occurrence of errors in copying or reading texts (*tashīf*, i.e. alteration in word form) and deviations in meaning due to inaccurate interpretation (*taḥrīf*, i.e. distortion of intended meaning). These phenomena affect not only the linguistic aspect but also lead to shifts in values and understandings within the social and religious life of Muslims. Therefore, a more rigorous study of textual change and deviation is necessary as part of the effort to preserve the integrity of Islamic teachings (Wardah, 2002).

Previous studies have made significant contributions to understanding the transmission and authenticity of classical Islamic texts, particularly the Qur'an and Hadith. These studies can generally be grouped into three main categories based on their methodological orientation. First, classical philological research has largely focused on the critique of *isnād* (chain of transmission) and *matn* (text content) within Hadith sciences. Scholars such as Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān in *Taysīr Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* (1985) and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ in *Muqaddimah fī 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* (Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, 2010) have shown how early Islamic scholarship was deeply concerned with preserving textual reliability. Within this framework, the concepts of *tashīf* (copyist errors) and *taḥrīf* (textual distortion) are often mentioned as cautionary issues, yet they are rarely treated as independent subjects of analytical inquiry.

Second, contemporary research on the transmission and interpretation of Islamic texts has increasingly focused on the challenges posed by translation, digitalization, and the evolving socio-cultural landscape of Muslim societies. Scholars have emphasized that translating Qur'anic Arabic into modern languages, particularly English, often results in semantic distortion or interpretive gaps, requiring refined strategies such as semantic balancing, literal translation, and explicative methods to preserve theological nuance (Alhaj, 2024; Chukhanov & Kairbekov, 2024). Efforts to create child-centered Qur'an translations have further complicated this task, as they demand a delicate balance between accessibility and doctrinal accuracy (Kabakci, 2023). At the same time, the digitization of Islamic texts and the use of artificial intelligence for Qur'anic interpretation represent a significant shift in how sacred knowledge is accessed and disseminated (Chukhanov & Kairbekov, 2024; Feener, 2007). These developments parallel broader efforts to reinterpret Islamic scripture in response to contemporary ethical concerns, including gender equity, legal reform, and environmental justice. Saeed (2005) promotes a contextualized, ethico-legal reading of the Qur'an, while Nikmatullah (2024) highlights reinterpretations of gender-related Hadith through reciprocal hermeneutics (*Qira'ah Mubādalah*). Despite this progress, these studies rarely engage with *tashīf* (scribal error) and *taḥrīf* (textual distortion) as distinct methodological problems within textual criticism. Thus, the philological mechanisms underlying textual deviation in Islamic manuscripts remain underexamined in modern discourse, justifying the need for further investigation.

Third, a number of theoretical contributions have attempted to reformulate Islamic textual criticism using interdisciplinary frameworks. Ridlo (2020) emphasizes the importance of philology as a core methodology in reconstructing Islamic knowledge, while Suryadinata (2020) and Rohmah & Rejo (2024) propose models that integrate linguistic, cultural, and historical perspectives. Nonetheless, *tashīf wa taḥrīf* has rarely been studied as a stand-alone analytical category within these models. Its potential as a tool for understanding both textual instability and epistemological shifts remains largely unexplored.

Although considerable work has been done in both classical and modern scholarship, there remains a clear gap in the systematic study of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* as both linguistic phenomena and epistemological challenges. This research seeks to fill that gap by repositioning *tashīf wa taḥrīf* not merely as technical flaws in textual transmission but as key entry points for critically engaging with the dynamics of meaning, authority, and interpretation in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

This study aims to address the aforementioned scholarly gap by offering a systematic and critical investigation of *tashīf* (scribal error) and *taḥrīf* (textual distortion) as independent analytical categories within Arabic philology. Specifically, the research seeks to examine how these phenomena occur in both the *sanad* (chain of transmission) and *matn* (textual content) of Islamic manuscripts, particularly Hadith literature, by identifying their linguistic forms, root causes, and interpretive consequences. By employing a qualitative-descriptive approach grounded in classical and contemporary philological frameworks, this study aims to develop a nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural and epistemological dynamics that contribute to textual variation. In doing so, the research not only reaffirms the relevance of philology as a methodological tool in Islamic studies but also contributes a novel perspective by integrating textual criticism with broader questions of meaning, authority, and authenticity in the transmission of sacred texts.

The central argument of this study posits that *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* are not merely technical anomalies in the transmission of Islamic texts but reflect deeper epistemological disruptions shaped by human limitations, socio-cultural contexts, and interpretive frameworks. The researcher assumes that scribal errors and textual distortions are influenced not only by visual or

auditory misperceptions but also by the ideological and institutional forces surrounding the production and reproduction of religious manuscripts. This hypothesis draws upon the theoretical framework of critical philology, which views textual variation as a product of both material conditions and intellectual intent (Cerquiglini, 1989). In this view, every act of copying, editing, or interpreting a text is embedded within a historical moment that inevitably shapes meaning. Therefore, the study predicts that *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* can serve as indicators of broader epistemic shifts within Islamic intellectual history—highlighting tensions between preservation and reinterpretation, orthodoxy and innovation. This perspective not only challenges the conventional perception of textual stability but also offers a methodological opening to rethink how sacred texts are transmitted, authenticated, and understood across time.

This study focuses its unit of analysis on the concept of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* (scribal errors and textual distortion) as found in classical Arabic texts, particularly religious manuscripts such as the Qur'an and Hadith (Luthfi, 2013). These artifacts are selected for their critical role in Islamic philological studies and their importance in preserving the authenticity of sacred teachings. The research adopts a qualitative-descriptive design using a library research approach (Afifuddin & Ahmad, 2018), which is considered appropriate for analyzing linguistic phenomena within their historical and contextual frameworks. This method enables an in-depth exploration of both classical and contemporary sources, allowing the researcher to trace the development and implications of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* over time (Devi, 2020; Gunawan, 2013).

The data for this study were derived from Islamic scholarly literature, including primary sources such as classical works on Hadith and philology (Fatikhin, 2020), especially *Taysīr Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* by Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, along with various commentaries (*sharḥ*) and treatises on textual criticism. Secondary sources included contemporary academic books, journal articles, and research publications discussing *tashīf wa taḥrīf* from historical, linguistic, and critical perspectives (Akbar, 2022). Data collection was carried out through documentation techniques, involving systematic reading, note-taking, and categorization of texts based on key themes such as definitions, classifications, causes, and implications of textual errors. The researcher ensured reliability through cross-verification of sources to minimize

interpretative bias. Data analysis followed a content analysis technique, beginning with thematic grouping, followed by source triangulation, mapping causal relationships, and finally, synthesizing the findings into a conceptual diagram to visualize the dynamic role of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* in Islamic textual tradition (Suryabrata, 1987).

Results and Discussion

1. Scope of Tashif wa Tahrif: Definition, Division, and Methodology

In the field of Arabic philology, *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* are recognized as central sub-disciplines concerned with textual alteration—either through visual misperception, phonetic confusion, or intentional modification. These terms are not merely descriptive labels but serve as analytical tools for detecting the reliability and transformation of transmitted texts. Hasjim Abbas (2004) underscores that this domain of study focuses on texts whose structure or pronunciation has been altered, whether due to human error or interpretive intention. This assertion is supported by classical philological sources, including the oft-cited definition from Soetari (2000), which describes this science as one that identifies changes that have occurred in both form (*mushahhaf*) and meaning (*muharraf*) of hadiths.

The historical foundation of this distinction is further elaborated in Mahmud al-Ṭaḥḥān's analysis of *tashīf* within the chapter "*al-Mardūd bi Sababi Ṭaʿn fī al-Rāwī*" in *Taysīr Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* (Thahan, 1985). He defines *mushahhaf* as a term derived from *tashīf*, indicating a copyist's error resulting in textual alteration due to misreading a manuscript (*al-Khaṭa' fī al-Ṣaḥīfah*). From this root, the term *as-shuḥufī* arises, referring to someone who misreads and thereby alters the intended meaning (Thahan, 1985). This definition is echoed and nuanced by Rozi (2013), who argues that *tashīf* extends beyond phonetic distortion to include shifts in syntactic and semantic structure, thereby altering the original narrative intent of the transmitter.

Building upon these foundations, as-Sakhawi introduces a slightly broader interpretation by emphasizing semantic deviation—"transforming a word from its familiar form to another meaning" (الهيئة عن الكلمة تحويل غيرها إلى المتعارفة). This conceptualization illustrates that *tashīf* is not limited to orthographic or phonetic flaws but includes any deviation that disrupts the original semantic framework. By contrast, *taḥrīf*—though often used

interchangeably with *tashīf*—carries a wider connotation in both classical and Qur'anic usage. Asriyah (2015) explains that *taḥrīf* encompasses any alteration from an original form, whether by omission, addition, or reinterpretation, and can occur through written or oral transmission.

This broader scope is reflected in Qur'anic discourse itself. In Surah al-Mā'idah (5:13), the term *yuḥarrifūna al-kalim ʿan mawāḍiʿihi* ("they distort the words from their places") is used to describe the deliberate misrepresentation of revealed scripture by the People of the Book. As cited by Salsabila Arrayyan (2023), this verse not only condemns distortion but also frames it as a moral failing—highlighting the theological significance of textual integrity. Consequently, *taḥrīf* is not merely a technical issue but becomes a marker of ethical and doctrinal deviation.

Taken together, these varying definitions illustrate that the scope of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* is both complex and multilayered—ranging from unintentional scribal mistakes to ideologically motivated reinterpretations. By systematizing these terms within philological inquiry, scholars are able to distinguish between accidental variation and deliberate manipulation, enabling more nuanced judgments regarding textual authenticity. These definitional frameworks, therefore, lay the groundwork for further methodological exploration, particularly in distinguishing between types of textual deviation and in tracing their implications within the broader context of Islamic intellectual history.

Building on the foundational definitions of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf*, Mahmud al-Ṭaḥḥān offers a systematic typology that categorizes textual distortion based on several key criteria ('Itr, 2014). This classification not only aids in understanding the mechanics of textual corruption but also provides a framework for philological analysis in Islamic scholarship. The typology is structured around four primary dimensions: locus of error, sensory cause, linguistic form, and interpretive shift.

First, when examined based on textual position, *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* may occur either in the sanad (chain of transmission) or the matn (content of the text). For instance, in the sanad, Yahya ibn Maʿīn misidentified *al-ʿAwwām ibn Muzāḥim* as *al-ʿAwwām ibn Murājim*, substituting the letters (ز) with (ر), and (ح) with (ج), likely due to visual similarity in handwritten scripts. In the matn, a well-documented case involves the narration of Zayd ibn Thābit, where

iḥtajara fī al-masjid ("he built a wall in the mosque") was erroneously transmitted as *iḥtajama fī al-masjid* ("he cupped in the mosque")—an alteration that significantly shifts the context and meaning of the prophetic action (ʼItr, 2014).

Second, considering the sensory cause, *tashīf* may result from either visual or auditory confusion. Visual *tashīf* typically arises due to poor handwriting, deteriorated manuscripts, or the absence of diacritical marks. A prominent example is Abu Bakr as-Shulī's misreading of the word *sittan* (six days) in the hadith about fasting six days of Shawwāl as *shay'an* (something)—a misreading with potential legal and devotional implications. Auditory *tashīf*, on the other hand, stems from phonetic similarity and listening errors, especially in oral transmission. A case in point involves the confusion between *ʻĀṣim al-Aḥwal* and *Wāṣil al-Aḥdab*, where the latter was incorrectly substituted due to similar phonological patterns, known in Arabic morphology as *wazn ṣarf* (ʼItr, 2014).

Third, from a linguistic perspective, *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* can be classified based on whether the alteration affects the script or the intended meaning. Some changes are explicit, such as the replacement or omission of letters, which clearly deviate from the original text. Others are more subtle, involving no alteration in spelling or pronunciation but a deviation in comprehension or intended referent. An illustrative case is the misunderstanding by al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-ʻAnazī, who interpreted the Prophet's prayer "*ṣallā ilā ʻAnazah*" as referring to the tribe of ʻAnazah, rather than to the spear (*ʻanzah*) placed before him as a marker for prayer direction—highlighting how semantic misinterpretation can alter the theological and historical understanding of a hadith (ʼItr, 2014).

Finally, Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar offers a summative classification that bridges prior dimensions by distinguishing between *mushahhaf* and *muḥarraf* traditions. A *mushahhaf* hadith involves changes in diacritical points or script markings, while a *muḥarraf* hadith includes alterations based on misjudgment or incorrect contextual assumptions, even if the script remains intact. This distinction underlines that distortion may occur not only in form but also in hermeneutic process—posing a more complex challenge to textual preservation and interpretation (ʼItr, 2014).

Taken together, these layered classifications demonstrate that *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* are not limited to mechanical transcription errors but encompass a spectrum of textual disruptions with significant theological, legal, and epistemological consequences. This structured analysis not only supports the need for rigorous philological verification but also repositions these phenomena as central concerns in contemporary Islamic textual criticism.

Table 1 Typological Classification of Tashīf and Taḥrīf

Dimension	**Category**	**Form of Distortion**	**Example**	**Classical Terminology**
Location in Text	*Sanad* (Chain)	Letter replacement	*al-'Awwām ibn Murājim* → *al-'Awwām ibn Muzāḥim*	*Mushahhaf*
	Matn (Content)	Word substitution	*iḥtajara fī al-masjid* → *iḥtajama fī al-masjid*	*Mushahhaf*
Sensory Cause	Visual Error	Misreading due to similar letters	*sittan* → *shay'an*	*Tashīf al-Baṣarī* (by sight)
	Auditory Error	Mishearing during oral transmission	*'Āṣim al-Aḥwal* → *Wāṣil al-Aḥdab*	*Tashīf as-Samā'ī* (by hearing)
Linguistic Form	Orthographic	Change in letters or dots	Change in diacritic marks	*Mushahhaf*
	Semantic	Same spelling, different interpretation	*ṣallā ilā 'Anazah* interpreted as tribe vs spear	*Muḥarraf*

Philological Framing	Ibn Ḥajar al-ʻAsqalānī	Form distortion (letter-level)	Altered diacritic or form	*Mushahhaf Hadith*
		Meaning distortion (conceptual-level)	Misreading intent/context	*Muḥarraf Hadith*

The preceding typology of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* reveals a multidimensional framework for understanding textual deviation. This is further illustrated in Table 1, which synthesizes the categorization of these phenomena based on textual location (sanad or matn), sensory cause (visual or auditory), linguistic form (written or semantic), and classical classification such as those proposed by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar. According to his model, *mushahhaf* refers to a hadith altered in form (e.g., diacritical errors), while *muḥarraf* signifies a shift in meaning, even if the script remains unchanged. This conceptual matrix affirms that textual distortion in Islamic literature cannot be reduced to mere scribal mistakes; it requires a comprehensive analytical approach that accounts for physical, cognitive, and interpretive factors in the transmission process.

To operationalize this analysis, scholars of Arabic philology have developed methodological tools that not only detect distortion but aim to restore the original textual integrity. The study of *tashīf*, in particular, is oriented toward reconstruction, requiring techniques that compare variant manuscripts and resolve ambiguities through informed philological judgment. Harun (1998) identifies several foundational methods: first, analysis of ancient manuscripts, which involves collating textual variants across extant codices to approximate the original reading; second, linguistic analysis, which interprets word usage, morphology, and syntax in classical Arabic to recover probable meanings; and third, historical contextualization, which investigates the socio-political and cultural conditions under which texts were produced and transmitted. These methods do not merely aim at restoring correct wording, but at reestablishing meaning within the broader epistemic horizon of the text's intended function.

On the other hand, the methodology applied to *taḥrīf*—textual distortion—leans more heavily on critical detection rather than reconstruction. Since *taḥrīf* often involves deliberate or ideologically driven manipulation, the focus shifts to exposing patterns of alteration that reflect shifts in theological, legal, or sectarian interests. This includes three key approaches: (1) textual criticism, which identifies inconsistencies or interpolations within the manuscript tradition; (2) historical criticism, which contextualizes textual changes within broader historical dynamics of power, doctrine, or reform; and (3) oral tradition studies, which trace distortions arising during oral transmission by comparing multiple chains of narration and performance-based variants. These techniques aim to unearth not just *what* changed, but *why* it changed—highlighting the intersection of text, authority, and ideology.

Thus, while *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* differ in intention and effect—reconstruction versus detection—their shared methodological orientation underscores the central aim of philological inquiry: to discern the authentic voice of tradition amid layers of historical transmission. In Qur'anic and Hadith studies, such methods are vital not only for textual preservation but for the cultivation of interpretive responsibility. By recognizing distortion not as an anomaly but as an inevitable feature of transmission, philology invites scholars to approach sacred texts with both reverence and rigor—balancing fidelity to the source with critical engagement of its historical trajectory.

2. Factors Affecting the Presence of Tashif wa Tahrif Sub-Science in Philology

In the field of philology, the accurate comprehension of ancient texts is fundamental for reconstructing historical narratives, cultural expressions, and intellectual traditions (Fahmi, 2022). However, this process is often complicated by the recurring phenomenon of textual distortion—namely, *tashīf* (scribal misreading) and *taḥrīf* (semantic alteration). These two phenomena are not only relevant as linguistic anomalies but represent a deeper layer of philological concern related to the transmission and reception of texts (Almakki, 2018). Their presence signifies potential epistemic shifts that impact the way texts are interpreted and historically positioned (Deviyanti, 2022). Therefore, identifying and analysing the contributing factors to *tashīf* wa *taḥrīf* becomes crucial for understanding how these distortions emerge and persist in manuscript traditions.

The first and perhaps most evident factor is the human element involved in the process of text reproduction. Human error—whether in copying, interpreting, or reciting—inevitably contributes to the appearance of distortions. Copyists, especially those lacking sufficient training or working under time pressure, are susceptible to visual and auditory misperceptions. These errors can manifest in the misreading of similar-looking Arabic letters or the mishearing of phonetically similar words during oral transmission, resulting in the transformation of *sanad* or *matn* content (Rozi, 2013). Furthermore, human motivations—whether ideological, theological, or political—may consciously or unconsciously lead to the insertion, omission, or reinterpretation of certain phrases, further intensifying the phenomenon of *taḥrīf*.

Beyond individual factors, the socio-cultural context in which a text is transmitted plays a significant role in shaping its form and content. Texts are never circulated in a vacuum; they are constantly negotiated within the norms, power structures, and intellectual climates of their time. During periods of intense political or theological contestation, manuscripts may be subtly altered to reflect dominant ideologies or suppress dissenting voices. Censorship, reinterpretation, or selective transmission of controversial passages can thus be viewed as a socially driven form of *taḥrīf*. As societies evolve, so too does the hermeneutic lens through which ancient texts are understood—sometimes leading to reinterpretations that diverge substantially from the original intent (Asriyah, 2015). This dynamic reveals that *tashīf* wa *taḥrīf* are not merely technical issues but culturally embedded phenomena.

A third influential factor stems from the very practice of textual criticism itself. While intended as a method for safeguarding authenticity, the tools of criticism—if poorly applied or influenced by bias—can become sources of distortion. Misguided efforts to harmonise conflicting narrations or reconstruct incomplete manuscripts can inadvertently introduce changes that deviate from the original. This is especially true in the study of Hadith and the Qur'an, where modern and classical scholars alike grapple with issues of variant readings (*qirā'āt*), weak narrators, and differing manuscript traditions. When critical methodologies are misused or insufficiently grounded in the linguistic and historical context of the text, the result is often a distortion rather than a clarification of meaning (Abbas, 2004).

Taken together, these factors demonstrate that *tashīf* wa *taḥrīf* are multifaceted phenomena, rooted in human limitations, cultural dynamics, and methodological practices. As such, philology plays a pivotal role in not only identifying and classifying these textual changes but also in interrogating the historical and intellectual conditions under which they arise. It is this critical function of philology that enables scholars to distinguish between natural textual variants and those distortions that carry significant epistemological consequences. The challenge, therefore, lies not merely in tracing errors, but in understanding their implications for the transmission of knowledge, authority, and religious authenticity across time.

3. Implications of Tashif wa Tahrif in Arabic Manuscripts

The phenomena of *tashīf* (scribal errors) and *taḥrīf* (textual distortion) in Arabic manuscripts carry profound implications that extend beyond mere linguistic inaccuracies. These phenomena serve as critical entry points for examining theological, philosophical, and political discourses that have shaped Islamic tradition across centuries. Scholars have long regarded the accurate preservation of the Qur'an and Hadith as foundational to maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings. As Kurniawan (2017) points out, the historical scrutiny of sacred texts reflects not only a scholarly concern for authenticity but also a communal responsibility to safeguard divine revelation from corruption or falsification.

In this regard, the work of Mahmud Thahhān (1985) provides a nuanced lens into how textual inconsistencies are evaluated within the Hadith tradition. Thahhān identifies two broad implications of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* concerning narrator credibility (*ḍabṭ al-rāwī*). When textual errors are infrequent, they are considered natural and forgivable, reflecting the human limitations of even the most reliable narrators. However, repeated inaccuracies by a transmitter are seen as detrimental to his intellectual trustworthiness, which may lead to the rejection of the narration. This insight illustrates that textual errors, while technical in appearance, can affect the epistemological status of the entire narration and influence juridical outcomes.

The implications of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* can be both constructive and problematic. On the positive side, their identification reinforces the preservation of textual authenticity. Awareness of these phenomena

motivates scholars to employ rigorous verification methods to ensure that the Qur'an and Hadith remain unaltered across generations (Wahab, 2020). This commitment helps maintain consistency in religious teachings, promotes doctrinal stability, and strengthens communal identity. Moreover, the scrutiny of textual variants fosters the development of robust hermeneutical tools in Islamic scholarship, such as isnād analysis, matn comparison, and philological critique.

However, these benefits are counterbalanced by potential negative consequences. A rigid application of the concept may lead to sectarian conflict or interreligious polemics, especially when *taḥrīf* is used to delegitimize other faith traditions—as implied in some classical readings of Qur'an 5:13. Furthermore, excessive concern with textual purity can stifle critical inquiry and inhibit interpretive pluralism within the Muslim ummah. As religious communities confront modern challenges—ranging from gender discourse to ecological ethics—a narrow insistence on textual fixity may prevent much-needed renewal. Such rigidity can result in the ossification of religious thought, making it difficult for Islam to respond effectively to evolving socio-cultural realities.

Therefore, a balanced approach is crucial—one that safeguards the textual heritage of Islam while also embracing critical engagement and contextual adaptation. The goal should not be merely to preserve words, but to ensure that the message continues to resonate meaningfully across generations. This dialectic between conservation and reinterpretation is precisely what makes *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* such important objects of study in Arabic philology and Islamic thought. These points are concisely summarized in Table 2.

While much of the discussion surrounding *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* centers on classical texts, it is important to acknowledge that these phenomena are not confined to the past. Contemporary instances, though less frequent, continue to occur—primarily due to human oversight such as haste in transcription (*bi sababi al-ʿujlah*) or limited editorial expertise (*qullat al-maʿrifah*), especially in the process of manuscript verification (*ʿilm al-taḥqīq*). In the modern era, these textual deviations often arise not from intentional distortion, but rather from inadvertent errors by copyists, editors, or publishers tasked with producing reliable versions of classical works.

Table 2. Implications of the Concept *of Tashif wa Tahrif*

No.	Positive	Negative
1	Maintaining the Authenticity of the Sacred Texts	Tensions between Groups
2	Encourage the Maintenance of Text Integrity	Limiting Criticism and Interpretation
3	Maintaining the Consistency of Religious Teachings	Inability to Thrive

A pertinent example can be found in *al-Aḥkām al-Wusṭā* by al-Ḥāfiẓ ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī, where a *tashīf* appears in the transcription of a Hadith:

((هكذا المتيمم يمسح ، فبدأ من مقدم رأسه إلى آخره))

The problematic word *al-mutyammim* (the one performing tayammum) appears incongruous with the context. Ibn al-Qaṭṭān notes that the correct word should likely be *al-yatīm* (the orphan), suggesting a scribal error influenced by the surrounding topic—*tayammum* (dry ablution)—which may have biased the scribe's choice of vocabulary. This case illustrates how textual context can unconsciously shape reproduction choices, reinforcing the need for meticulous editorial review and philological expertise.

These observations lead to a deeper legal and scholarly debate: should textual errors in *sanad* (chain of transmission) or *matn* (content) be corrected post-discovery? The answer is far from unanimous. One camp of scholars insists that erroneous renderings must remain untouched, arguing that any attempt to "correct" a mistake risks imposing subjectivity onto the transmission and blurring the line between the original and the editorially reconstructed. According to this view, fidelity to the manuscript—even with its imperfections—is paramount. In contrast, another scholarly camp, including figures like Ibn al-Mubārak and al-Awzāʿī, supports emendation where textual corruption is evident, allowing corrected versions to be taught and transmitted. This approach prioritizes the preservation of intended meaning over the preservation of flawed form.

Navigating between these two views, Imam Nawawī offers a mediatory position. He suggests that scribal errors should be left as they are in the original text, but with annotated corrections added in marginal notes or

commentaries. This allows readers to access both the flawed transmission and the scholarly reconstruction, enabling transparency and interpretive discretion. Such a balanced approach reinforces the importance of intellectual humility in philology—recognizing that while textual preservation is critical, so too is the responsibility to guide readers through its potential errors (Rozi, 2013).

Ultimately, these discussions underscore that *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* are not only linguistic anomalies but also hermeneutical challenges that invite ethical and methodological reflection. They compel scholars to grapple with questions of authority, authenticity, and interpretive responsibility—both in classical exegesis and in the ongoing task of preserving the Islamic intellectual tradition in an age of global textual circulation.

4. Rethinking Tashīf wa Taḥrīf through the Lens of Critical Philology

The preceding results reveal that the phenomena of *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* in Arabic manuscripts are not mere technical errors but complex epistemological events that reflect historical, ideological, and cognitive dimensions of textual transmission. This multi-layered nature aligns closely with Bernard Cerquiglini's proposition in *Éloge de la Variante* (1989), which challenges the assumption of a single, stable, and original text. Instead, Cerquiglini proposes that all texts are fundamentally *variant*—produced, reproduced, and altered within the social, material, and intellectual conditions of their time. When applied to the Islamic tradition, particularly the transmission of Hadith and Qur'anic manuscripts, this theory helps recast *tashīf wa taḥrīf* not merely as faults but as windows into the dynamics of textual meaning, authority, and historical change.

From this perspective, the traditional Islamic scholarly effort to identify, classify, and—where necessary—correct distortions mirrors Cerquiglini's emphasis on the importance of textual variation as a historical trace. The typological classification outlined in the results (visual vs. auditory errors, orthographic vs. semantic distortions, etc.) reflects an embedded recognition that textual transmission is inherently susceptible to fluctuation, and that meaning is continually negotiated through this flux. In particular, Ibn Ḥajar's distinction between *mushahhaf* (form-based distortion) and *muḥarraf* (meaning-based distortion) resonates with Cerquiglini's view that every act of copying is also an act of interpretation—no reproduction is neutral.

Furthermore, the cases of mistaken identity in *sanad*, or interpretive misreadings of *matn*, as seen in the *'Anazah* example or the substitution of *al-yatīm* with *al-mutyammim*, illustrate how ideological context, visual limitations, or assumptions of the scribe contribute to textual transformation. Rather than being anomalies, these cases demonstrate that sacred texts are not transmitted in a vacuum but are shaped by human subjectivity and historical contingency. As Cerquiglini argues, the search for a fixed "ur-text" is a modern illusion; the manuscript tradition is inherently plural and contingent.

This theoretical grounding challenges the rigid philological pursuit of an unaltered original and opens up a more reflective stance on textual authenticity. It aligns with the mediatory position of Imam Nawawī, who allowed for the retention of flawed texts with scholarly annotation. His approach, like Cerquiglini's, acknowledges that the scholarly act is not about eliminating variation, but about making variation legible, traceable, and meaningful. Thus, the act of "preserving" tradition necessarily involves an interpretive dimension—what Cerquiglini would call *critical engagement* with variant texts.

Repositioning *tashīf wa taḥrīf* within a *critical philology* framework provides a deeper appreciation for their role in Islamic intellectual history. Rather than viewing these textual phenomena solely as defects to be corrected, they should be approached as evidence of historical processes, shifts in hermeneutic authority, and the evolving nature of scriptural understanding. Such a view invites a more nuanced, dynamic engagement with Islamic texts, one that embraces both the integrity of tradition and the historical realities of its transmission.

Compared to previous studies, the present research offers a distinct analytical contribution by positioning *tashīf wa taḥrīf* not merely as incidental technical issues within textual transmission, but as central and independent objects of philological inquiry. While classical scholarship—exemplified by figures such as Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ—has thoroughly examined the integrity of *isnād* and *matn*, their treatment of scribal and interpretive deviations often appears ancillary, subsumed within broader discussions of narrator reliability or textual authentication. In contrast, this study foregrounds *tashīf wa taḥrīf* as phenomena with their own internal

logic, typology, and methodological implications. Furthermore, contemporary research has primarily addressed semantic shifts arising from translation, digitization, and contextual re-interpretation of Islamic texts (Alhaj, 2024; Nikmatullah, 2024; Saeed, 2005), yet it tends to overlook the micro-level textual distortions embedded in manuscript traditions. This study thus fills a critical gap by offering a structured typology of *tashīf wa taḥrīf*, demonstrating their theological, epistemological, and philological stakes. The novelty of this research lies in its systematic integration of classical textual analysis with the conceptual frameworks of *critical philology*, especially Cerquiglini's theory of textual variance, thereby expanding the methodological horizon of Islamic manuscript studies beyond traditional authenticity frameworks.

The findings of this study demonstrate that *tashīf* and *taḥrīf* are not merely anomalies of manuscript transmission but represent deep-seated ideological, social, and historical tensions within the broader landscape of Islamic intellectual tradition. Textual distortions—whether accidental or deliberate—signal more than mechanical errors; they mark the shifting authority structures, theological contestations, and interpretive strategies that accompany the evolution of sacred knowledge. As Chukhanov and Kairbekov (2024) note, the semantic and linguistic integrity of Islamic texts is constantly negotiated through processes of reinterpretation shaped by sociocultural pressures. The fact that translation and digitalization have further exposed texts to semantic drift reinforces the relevance of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* in modern contexts of religious engagement.

Moreover, the persistence of these phenomena into the contemporary era—despite advances in editing technologies and digitization platforms—illustrates the enduring fragility of textual transmission. Even with increasing scholarly attention to precision, human oversight and limited editorial capacity can still lead to critical errors in manuscript reproduction (Alhaj, 2024). As modern Muslim intellectuals like Saeed (2005) and Nikmatullah (2024) advocate for ethico-legal and gender-aware hermeneutics, this study affirms that *tashīf wa taḥrīf* must be recognized not only as technical concerns but also as interpretive fault lines that challenge claims to absolute textual fixity .

Ultimately, the implications of this research align with critical philological concerns. As Feener (2007) show, the interplay between tradition and modernity—especially in areas such as education, sustainability, and gender justice—requires both fidelity to classical frameworks and openness to contemporary reinterpretation. Thus, *tashīf wa taḥrīf*, when critically examined, do not merely disrupt tradition but become productive sites for rethinking the boundaries of textual integrity, editorial ethics, and communal authority in an age of accelerated textual circulation.

Conclusion

This study reveals that *tashīf wa taḥrīf* (textual distortion and alteration) is a critical phenomenon in Arabic philology, particularly affecting the transmission of ḥadīth texts. The key finding emphasizes that most textual errors result from the visual similarity of Arabic letters—such as *jīm* (ج), *ḥāʾ* (ح), and *khāʾ* (خ)—compounded by the absence of diacritical marks in early manuscripts. These orthographic ambiguities often lead to semantic distortions, especially when the oral transmission process (*samāʿ*) and the ethical supervision of teachers or editors are lacking. Beyond mere technical error, such distortions reflect deeper historical and epistemological dynamics that influence the preservation and interpretation of sacred texts. Therefore, the study highlights the necessity of rigorous philological awareness to ensure textual integrity, underscoring that *tashīf wa taḥrīf* are not accidental slips but critical markers of the evolving relationship between language, meaning, and authority in Islamic intellectual history.

The central contribution of this research lies in reinterpreting *tashīf wa taḥrīf* not as mere technical faults, but as productive analytical categories in philological and critical textual studies. By integrating classical Islamic scholarship with the theoretical lens of critical philology—particularly Bernard Cerquiglini's notion of textual variance—the study bridges traditional Islamic disciplines and modern interpretive frameworks. It offers a methodological advance in recognizing *tashīf wa taḥrīf* as historical signals of meaning-making, doctrinal shifts, and the evolution of scriptural authority. Moreover, it brings to light new questions about the role of scribes, editors, and scholars in mediating between textual fidelity and evolving interpretive needs in both classical and contemporary Islamic thought.

Nevertheless, this study also acknowledges its limitations. While the analysis draws on selected classical cases and key theoretical references, it is limited by the absence of a broader empirical survey of manuscript variations across regional traditions and historical periods. Additionally, the exploration of contemporary digital and AI-driven textual reproductions in the context of *tashīf wa taḥrīf* remains underdeveloped and could benefit from deeper investigation. Future research should expand on this foundation by incorporating quantitative textual comparison across manuscript families, as well as exploring how emerging technologies influence modern perceptions of textual integrity and authenticity in the Muslim world.

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Innovative Mosque Management: Transforming Social Services and Youth Engagement at Masjid Sejuta Pemuda in Sukabumi, Indonesia

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi secara sistematis program layanan sosial keagamaan di Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, dengan fokus pada struktur manajemen, pelaksanaan program sosial yang sedang berjalan, serta identifikasi dan evaluasi dampaknya terhadap masyarakat. Penelitian ini penting karena memberikan pemahaman terhadap praktik manajemen masjid yang inklusif, berkelanjutan, dan berbasis data. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan sosiologi agama. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, sementara analisis dilakukan secara tematik melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Masjid Sejuta Pemuda berhasil mengembangkan model manajemen masjid modern yang berkelanjutan melalui lima pilar utama, yaitu ibadah, pendidikan, sosial, ekonomi, dan ukhuwah. Program unggulan seperti Musafir *Friendly Mosque*, Dapur Bagi-Bagi, dan *Free Premium Coffee Bar* menunjukkan penerapan pemetaan sosial dan pendekatan berbasis data yang tepat sasaran. Transparansi keuangan dan digitalisasi administrasi turut memperkuat efektivitas manajemen. Dampaknya, masjid ini mampu meningkatkan partisipasi pemuda, memperkuat solidaritas sosial, serta memberikan manfaat ekonomi dan spiritual bagi masyarakat sekitar. Temuan ini memiliki implikasi penting bagi pengembangan manajemen masjid yang lebih inovatif dan mandiri, serta dapat direplikasi sebagai model masjid modern. Secara orisinal,

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penelitian ini menawarkan kontribusi baru dalam literatur manajemen masjid melalui konsep "Mosque of Civilization 5.0" yang mengintegrasikan layanan sosial, teknologi, dan kepemimpinan pemuda. Penelitian ini juga menjadi pedoman praktis bagi pengelola masjid dalam menerapkan inovasi sosial, strategi rekrutmen pemuda, penggalangan dana digital, dan manajemen keuangan yang transparan.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen masjid; sosial keagamaan; kepemimpinan pemuda.

Abstract

This research aims to systematically explore the religious social service *programmes* at the *Masjid Sejuta Pemuda*, focusing on the management structure, implementation of ongoing social *programmes*, and identification and evaluation of their impact on the community. This research is important because it provides an understanding of inclusive, sustainable, and data-based mosque management practices. The method used is qualitative with a sociology of religion approach. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and document analysis, while analysis is done thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that *Masjid Sejuta Pemuda* succeeded in developing a sustainable modern mosque management model through five main pillars, namely worship, education, social, economic, and *ukhuwah*. Flagship *programmes* such as *Musafir* Friendly Mosque, *Dapur Bagi-Bagi,* and Free Premium Coffee Bar demonstrate the application of social mapping and a targeted data-based approach. Financial transparency and digitalisation of administration also strengthen management effectiveness. As a result, the mosque is able to increase youth participation, strengthen social solidarity, and provide economic and spiritual benefits to the surrounding community. The findings have important implications for the development of more innovative and independent mosque management, and can be replicated as a model for modern mosques. In an original way, this research offers a new contribution to the mosque management literature through the concept of 'Mosque of Civilization 5.0' that integrates social services, technology, and youth leadership. The research also provides practical guidance for mosque managers in implementing social innovation, youth recruitment strategies, digital fundraising, and transparent financial management.

Keywords: *Mosque management; social religion; youth leadership.*

Introduction

Indonesia has great potential as an asset for national development, especially in the fields of employment and education. Based on data from 2023, Indonesia's youth reached 23.18% of the total population, with the largest concentration in Java (BPS, 2023). This demographic potential makes

youth a strategic group in creating the nation's social and economic progress. However, ironically, in recent years, youth participation in mosque activities has actually decreased. This phenomenon shows the distance between the younger generation and religious institutions that should be a space for character building and social solidarity. When youth are increasingly distanced from mosques, there is a vacuum in the regeneration of spiritual and social values at the community level, which in the long run can weaken the role of religion in social life.

One of the reasons for the low involvement of youth in mosque activities is their lack of understanding of the role of mosques in everyday life (Bagaskara et al., 2024). Mosques are often only perceived as places of ritual worship, not as centres of guidance, education and social services. This phenomenon is important to study because it shows an imbalance between the ideal function and the reality on the ground. In this context, the emergence of the Million Youth Mosque in Sukabumi City as a positive example is very relevant. This mosque takes a modern approach through the concept of Masjid Peradaban 5.0 and has successfully attracted the involvement of the younger generation through innovative programs such as Musafir Friendly Mosque, Free Kitchen, and Cat Friendly Mosque. This example shows that when mosques are managed creatively and openly, they can become inclusive spaces that are relevant to the lives of modern society, especially youth.

The paradox of mosque development in Indonesia is increasingly visible when many mosques are built majestically at high costs, but lack activities and congregations. This phenomenon is reflected in the number of mosques that are only crowded during religious holidays, while on ordinary days they are quiet and not even functioning optimally (Niam, 2019). This indicates that physical splendour is not a guarantee of the mosque's social and spiritual effectiveness. The mosque becomes a symbol of prestige and pride, not a centre of social transformation. The One Million Youth Mosque comes as an antithesis to this condition. By still paying attention to the aesthetics of the building, this mosque actually prioritises functionality and social benefits through various services that directly touch the needs of the community. This case confirms that mosques can not only be places of worship, but also dynamic public service centres if supported by visionary management.

Another problem that hinders the optimisation of the mosque's function is the lack of openness and hospitality towards the congregation. Many mosques put up prohibition signs such as 'no babies', 'no sleeping', 'no eating and drinking', and some are even locked outside of prayer times (Syahbudin, 2023). This condition reflects the exclusivity and unfriendliness of worship spaces to the needs of the people, including vulnerable groups such as travellers or the poor. In this context, Masjid Sejuta Pemuda once again provides a different example: this mosque opens access to travellers with friendly facilities and provides a public kitchen and treats animals such as cats with compassion. This approach not only addresses the practical needs of the congregation, but also expands the meaning of the mosque as an inclusive and humane public space. Therefore, this phenomenon is very important to analyse academically and practically in order to find a more adaptive and socially just mosque management model.

The existing literature on mosque management and its social functions can be categorized into three primary areas of focus: the role of mosques in providing social services, youth involvement in socio-religious activities, and the integration of technology in mosque management. First, studies on mosque-based social services consistently highlight the pivotal role mosques play in Muslim communities, extending beyond their core function as places of worship to becoming centers for education, economic empowerment, and disaster management. Al-Krenawi (2016) emphasizes the significance of collaboration between mosques and social workers in providing culturally relevant crisis support, while Kurjono et al. (2022) demonstrate how zakat and waqf management in mosques contributes to poverty alleviation. Similarly, Abd Wakil et al. (2024) illustrate how mosques in Malaysia enhance social welfare through economic and educational initiatives. Despite these findings, existing studies insufficiently address how technological integration could improve transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in mosque social services, including in areas such as disaster response (Cheema et al., 2014).

Second, the literature identifies declining youth participation in mosque activities as a persistent challenge, influenced by limited awareness of the mosque's broader social role (Bagaskara et al., 2024) and a lack of responsiveness from mosque administrators to youth needs (Suyuti & Fitriani, 2022). While previous research highlights the benefits of youth involvement—such as fostering independence, civic engagement, and moral

development (Perks & Haan, 2011; Yuliawati, 2023) —there is a noticeable gap in exploring innovative, technology-driven strategies to attract and engage younger demographics. Schwadel (2008) adds that socio-economic factors further hinder youth involvement, yet the potential of digital tools to overcome these barriers remains underexplored.

Third, while the integration of technology in mosque management has received growing scholarly attention, its application to social services management is still limited. Sutono and Risyan (2023) and Firman and Basri (2023) highlight the role of digitalization in improving accessibility, transparency, and efficiency, yet concrete models for technology-enabled social service delivery are lacking. Furthermore, research on mosque facility management has introduced concepts such as Building Information Models (El-Maraghy et al., 2023) and Sustainable Facilities Management (Muin et al., 2024), focusing on environmental sustainability and operational performance. Despite these advancements, the application of smart systems, renewable energy, and IoT technologies to mosque social management remains largely unexplored (Abdulmouti et al., 2022), with challenges related to resource disparities and technological readiness posing significant barriers. Consequently, there is a clear research gap in developing integrated, technology-driven models for mosque social services that are both sustainable and inclusive.

The existing literature on mosque management and social functions provides valuable insights into various aspects, such as the provision of social services, youth involvement, and the use of technology in mosque operations. However, a significant gap remains in the comprehensive exploration of how mosques can integrate service innovation and youth leadership in their social functions, particularly within the context of a modern, technology-driven management model. While previous studies have examined the role of mosques in disaster management, social empowerment, and youth engagement, they often fail to address the specific challenges and opportunities associated with leveraging digital tools and youth leadership to enhance social services. This research aims to fill this gap by focusing on the transformation of mosque social functions through innovative service models and youth leadership, particularly at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda. By examining the mosque's integrated approach to social services, youth recruitment, financial transparency, and digital administration, this study offers a novel

perspective on how mosques can evolve into centers of modern community development. The findings of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of how mosques can adapt to contemporary social needs, using data-driven management practices and fostering youth leadership to ensure long-term sustainability and relevance. This research, therefore, provides a new conceptual framework for mosque management, represented by the 'Mosque of Civilization 5.0,' which incorporates technological innovation, social service integration, and youth empowerment as its core components.

This research argues that mosques, traditionally seen as centers of ritual worship in Islam, have a much broader social and cultural role, in line with the thoughts of Nurcholish Madjid, who emphasized that mosques should serve as centers of Islamic civilization, addressing both spiritual and social needs (Madjid, 2019). Building on this foundation, the study posits that innovative mosque management, grounded in Islamic values and enhanced by modern technology, can significantly improve the effectiveness and sustainability of social services within the community. This approach challenges the conventional view of mosques as merely symbols of religiosity, proposing instead that they function as dynamic centers for social and cultural activity. Supporting this argument, Joachim Wach's theory highlights that religious practices are not just individual and ritualistic, but also social and organizational (Wach, 1994). Furthermore, drawing from Emile Durkheim's perspective on modern society, which emphasizes the differentiation of social functions and the need for institutions, including mosques, to adapt through professionalized management structures (Durkheim, 2016), this research assumes that when mosques are managed with modern methods, clear organizational frameworks, and structured social programs, they can actively contribute to community welfare and effectively meet the challenges of the digital era. Thus, the study asserts that innovative mosque management is not only possible but necessary for adapting to the evolving social landscape.

This research employs a qualitative approach, with a case study of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda in Sukabumi City as the primary unit of analysis, to explore in-depth how faith-based social services are integrated into mosque management. The selection of this approach is grounded in the view of John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, who argue that a sociology of religion

perspective offers a comprehensive understanding of how religious practices intersect with social dynamics in communities (Turner, 2011). The study uses both primary and secondary data: primary data includes semi-structured interviews with mosque administrators, CEOs, worshippers, local residents, and travelers who have used the mosque's services, while secondary data consists of internal mosque documents, activity reports, and relevant literature. Non-participatory observation techniques were employed to capture the social interactions and activities within the mosque setting. The analysis followed a thematic approach, as recommended in qualitative research, to identify patterns and extract meanings from the data (Majid, 2017). Following the data collection and coding process, the researcher synthesized thematic interpretations to understand the relationships between mosque management, social service innovation, and the role of religion in modern communities. In the final stage, conclusions were drawn to uncover the meanings, trends, and implications of the findings, aiming to contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable models of religious social services (Sugiyono, 2012).

Results and Discussion

1. Mosque Management Structure

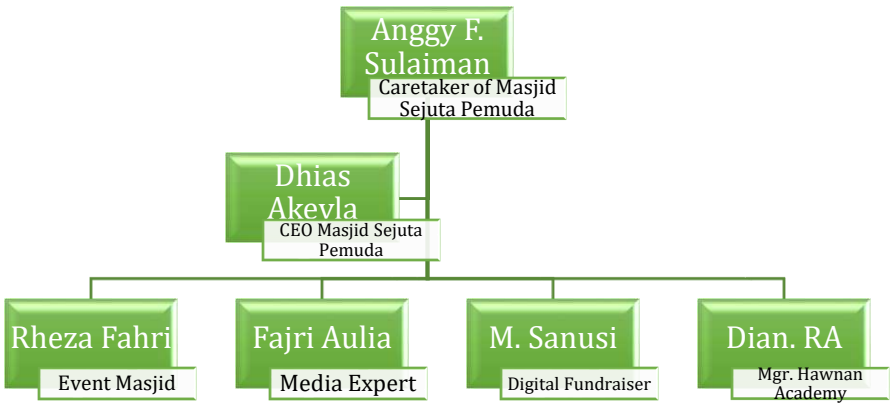
The establishment of the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda relies on the hadith related to youth whose hearts are attached to the mosque as well as several verses of the Qur'an that emphasize the function of the mosque. One of them is Q.S. An-Nur (24:38) which emphasizes the mosque as a place of unlimited sharing. This concept emphasizes the active role of youth in reviving the mosque as a social and spiritual center in accordance with the name of this mosque reflecting the identity of the younger generation, while its theological basis confirms the multidimensional function of the mosque in fostering, empowering, and religious civilization.

Masjid Sejuta Pemuda has five main missions to carry out its vision as a civilization mosque. First, the Baitullah pillar which aims to make the mosque a place where people return to Allah. Second, the Baitul Qur'an pillar which focuses on religious learning. This pillar provides access for people who want to improve their worship, such as learning to read the Qur'an, both for children and adults. Third, the Baitul Maal pillar that addresses various social and economic issues, such as poverty and usury based debt. The mosque

optimizes the role of zakat and social funds in order to help people in need, so that no funds are deposited. Fourth, the Baitul Muamalah pillar which encourages the mosque to have a business so that it can be financially independent, not only depending on the infaq and alms of worshipers. Fifth, the Baitul Ukhuwah pillar that builds close relationships between worshipers. This mosque is not only a place for congregational prayer, but also a place to strengthen ukhuwah, collaborate, and build togetherness in the community. These five pillars are the main foundation in realizing the 5.0 Civilization Mosque, which functions as a place of worship, learning center, social, economic, and brotherhood for the people. This shows that the vision of the mosque as a center of civilization is realized through five main pillars that reflect the multidimensional role of the mosque.

The management structure of the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda adopts a structured leadership system with a clear division of tasks as shown in Table 1. Ustadz Anggy F. Sulaiman, as the caretaker of the mosque, acts as a spiritual leader and strategic decision maker. Dhias Akeyla, as CEO, is responsible for the operations and management of the mosque including team coordination and development strategies. This structure is supported by several divisions, such as Mosque Events managed by Rheza Fahri, Media Expert by Fajri Aulia, Digital Fundraiser by Sanusi, and Hawnan Academy managed by Dian R.A. The division of roles reflects a modern, professional management approach, while remaining based on Islamic values and da'wah.

Table 1. Management Structure of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda



In its structure, the mosque management applies a recruitment system based on needs and expertise, but still provides opportunities for individuals who are willing to learn and commit to the values of the mosque. The Masjid Academy program also plays a role in equipping prospective administrators before being directly involved in management. Within the management period, there is no limit on the board's term of office, but strict monitoring is applied to maintain leadership effectiveness and ensure daily congregation targets are met. In addition, the expansion of the mosque through coaching and the waqf system shows a long-term vision in expanding the benefits to the community. With five main pillars and young leadership, the mosque prioritizes professionalism without abandoning the value of togetherness, making this mosque a model of progressive mosque management.

Figure 1. Open Recruitment Poster

Masjid Sejuta Pemuda was built with the aim of becoming a center of civilization managed by youth. The management of the mosque is also carried out professionally with an equality-based leadership system, where each board carries out its duties in accordance with the mandate given, as well as a recruitment process that emphasizes commitment to learning and contributing.

The management structure that is based on equality but still has a clear leadership system shows that the management of the One Million Youth Mosque is not only based on a family approach, but also structured and professional. In addition, this mosque places young people as the main driver in driving the success of the program, with the recruitment and selection process being able to form a management dominated by professional and committed young people.

This finding proves that the management of the One Million Youth Mosque has successfully implemented a modern system based on professionalism through the Masjid Academy program. This is in line with Firman & Basri's research which emphasizes the importance of modern management, technology, and the role of the mosque as an economic center and community development (Firman & Basri, 2023). The recruitment and training of marbot reflects an organized structure according to the mosque's vision. As the study by Siti Yumnah shows, mosques that involve various ideas are able to provide wider social and worship benefits (Siti Yumnah, 2021). This model is an example of modern mosque adaptation without ignoring its essence as a place of worship and center of Islamic civilization, provided that there is broader community involvement to sustain its role as a center of social change.

2. Religious Social Services Program

The Masjid Sejuta Pemuda attracts young people with relevant facilities by providing coffee and WiFi, and three main elements are implemented. As expressed by the CEO of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda.

> "...we present the happy room with facilities and friendly human resources, good human resources, who welcome, who serve. Then the satiety room we provide snacks, coffee, food and others. And the quiet room is where we become a good listener for anyone who comes..." (Interview by Widiawati, September 12, 2024).

The statement confirms that the service at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda seeks to create a friendly and inclusive environment for worshipers and is relevant to young people through the facilities provided and through human resources who have been trained to serve worshipers.

Table 2. Social Services Program at Masjid Sejuta Pemuda

Program Name	Program Definition	Program Objectives
Traveler Friendly Mosque	Provide facilities and services for travelers who are on the move.	Pilgrims who need rest facilities.
Free Food Sharing Kitchen	Providing free meals three times a day to regularly scheduled worshippers after congregational prayers.	Pilgrims and Travelers

Free Premium Coffee Bar	Providing premium coffee made by professional baristas free of charge for worshipers.	Pilgrims, travelers, young people.
Happy Market	Providing staples to meet the needs of the surrounding community	The surrounding community
HUPN	Hadiah Untuk Pejuang Nafkah is a program that aims to appreciate the breadwinners	Breadwinner

Figure 2. Traveler Friendly Mosque Program

The mosque also provides various facilities for travelers and pilgrims who stop by as shown in Table 2**,** so this mosque is known as the Musafir Friendly Mosque. Some of the main facilities provided include a resting place complete with mattresses, pillows and blankets, as shown in Figure 2**.** The traveler-friendly mosque program is an implementation of the Baitul Ukhuwah pillar which allows worshipers to stay overnight with certain conditions addition, there is a free Premium Coffee Bar serving coffee and snacks. This service program is a space for pilgrims, especially young people, to discuss and enjoy coffee or tea with a supportive view. The barista who serves this program was previously a bar manager at one of the cafes in Sukabumi. With the presence of professionals and the use of adequate equipment, this coffee bar shows professional service and serious management, as shown in Figure 3**.** The coffee served is original coffee, so as to maintain quality and taste. The coffee bar at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda is designed to attract young people to comfortably spend time at the mosque, without worrying about leaving the congregational prayer. This program was

initiated from the trend of young people spending time outside rather than in the mosque.

Figure 3. View of Cafe Bar Mosque

The mosque also has a sharing kitchen that produces hundreds of portions of food for worshipers every day. This free meal service program three times a day has adequate place facilities, as shown in Figure 4. This program is the implementation of the Baitul Muamalah pillar. In this program, donors can donate food or other staples. Likewise, this mosque collaborates with business owners who can support the mosque's operations by donating their business products, such as a syrup factory that regularly supplies drinks for the mosque's needs.

Figure 4. Food Sharing Kitchen Program Poster

The provision of various facilities and services in this mosque applies to everyone regardless of social status and religious background. Every worshipper from various economic levels is free to enjoy this service as a form of concern for all servants of Allah. As stated by the CEO of the Mosque: "The House of Allah is introduced for everyone. Whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, they are entitled to benefit from the house of Allah swt..." (Interview by Widiawati, September 12, 2024).

With services and facilities that are open to all backgrounds, the mosque is an attraction for other donors including non-Muslims to participate in supporting the sustainability of the program. For social programs that involve direct assistance, the mosque implements an assessment and social mapping system. Through this process, the mosque identifies people who are really in need using certain indicators. The data obtained is then analyzed and discussed at meetings to determine the target beneficiaries. Thus, although public facilities such as three meals a day and rest areas are open to the public, other social assistance programs are still provided selectively based on the results of the assessment.

Each program has a dedicated team responsible for its respective pillars. Program evaluation is carried out in stages, where leaders in each field are responsible for program improvement and refinement. Strategic decisions are still consulted with the caregivers to ensure alignment with the mosque's vision and mission. In addition, to attract youth through service programs, the first step in planning is to analyze the target audience. The management understands the preferences, culture, and needs of young people so that the programs designed are truly relevant. More clearly in his interview, the mosque division explained:

> “Some of the factors that we pay attention to are probably from 5W1H. We also apply SWOT analysis in making programs... Then we also make trial and error. So definitely from one program, for example Youth Space, the concept is not immediately fixed like that. There must be concept experiments that we carry out until we get a pattern that suits what we want and is suitable for the congregation we are targeting..." (Interview by Widiawati, November, 2024).

This target audience analysis ensures that the programs are relevant and engaging for youth and communities, as they are designed based on needs analysis and developed collaboratively.

In addition to these flagship programs, the Mosque also has a Gifts for Livelihood Fighters program as shown in Table 2. Every month, recipients who meet certain indicators will receive gifts as a form of appreciation. In addition to gifts, assistance is also provided in the form of money. This program aims to support and appreciate the struggle of a father in earning a living. In addition, Mgr. Hawnan Academy explained about the Happy Market program:

> "...Because we also pay attention to their needs. Every month we hold a happy market, where the women after the study, the women are given vegetables, given raw materials for cooking, so..." (Interview by Widiawati, February, 2025).

This statement shows that the mosque can create a solution space for the surrounding community by organizing the Happy Market as a monthly necessity.

Meanwhile, programs in the Baitullah pillar include study activities divided according to age groups such as children, teenagers, adults, and parents as well as based on gender such as the Muslimah Level Up study. Although no non-Muslims have come to the mosque, some converts visit after being attracted by information on Instagram and come to explore Islam and share their experiences.

The success of the program at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda is measured based on the achievement of predetermined targets. Program evaluation is carried out as needed, either directly after the event or regularly according to the schedule of each division. As the fund distribution report contained in Figure 5. which shows the number of beneficiaries in each program from each pillar of the mosque.

Figure 5. Fund Disbursement Report

As shown in Figure 6, the management of funds managed by the Baitul Maal pillar, there is a separation mechanism between infaq, waqf, and other types of donations so that the use of funds is in accordance with their respective contracts. This is done to ensure effectiveness in fund distribution. With this report, donors can see that the donations given are actually used in accordance with the agreed contract, thus fostering trust and satisfaction in the congregation. To attract donors, the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda is specially managed by the Baitul Maal team and the Media Team.

Figure 6. Baitul Maal Pillar Team Report

Based on the data obtained, the main pattern in the implementation of religious social service programs at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda shows services that are inclusive and based on care. This is evidenced in the food-sharing kitchen service program and premium coffee bar that cares about worshipers and youth who are more comfortable in a cafe than in a mosque. The success of the program has indicators in the form of setting achievement targets, so that each program can be analyzed and adjusted to the needs of the congregation..

Masjid Sejuta Pemuda also has a strong pattern of attracting youth to participate in mosque activities. Programs such as the Free Premium Coffee Bar become more convenient and relevant facilities for the younger generation. In addition, the mosque is able to reduce dependence on infaq and sadaqah by organizing digital fundraising and collaboration with donors. Transparency in fund management through reports published to donors is one of the important factors that increase the trust of worshipers in the mosque.

The results of this study indicate that this mosque has successfully developed a social service model based on modern mosque management and oriented towards sustainability. This is in line with the findings at the Darussalam Mosque which show that modern mosques not only function as places of worship but also centers of family empowerment, including economic and social aspects (Arifin & Azzahra, 2024). In addition, this mosque also shows that with good financial management transparency the mosque can achieve financial independence and expand its reach to collaborate with many communities. The results of this study are in line with the findings at the Abu Hanifah Mosque, Banjarmasin Islamic Hospital, which show that accountability and transparency in mosque financial management can improve the welfare of the people, and support the financial independence of the mosque(Bustani, 2024). The concept of Masjid Peradaban 5.0 can be a standard model for other mosques in improving their socio-religious functions through widely developed strategies.

3. Impact of the Program on the Community

Social services have a crucial role in improving community welfare, strengthening solidarity, and encouraging community self-reliance through various sustainable programs. The existence of the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda has

a significant impact in increasing the sense of security in the surrounding neighborhood. Previously, the area around the mosque was a dark and unsafe area, especially for women. The social service aspect in the form of sustainable mosque activities creates changes in mobility and involvement in the social life of the community.

Residents have also felt a big change in their neighborhood since the existence of this mosque. According to him, the mosque is not only a place to pray, but also presents various activities that make the atmosphere more lively. Since this mosque became famous, there have always been visitors who come either to pray, attend studies, stay in touch, or travelers who stop by to rest. As expressed by one of the worshipers.

> "I stopped by this mosque to pray, I was immediately welcomed by the GEN Z administrators who were very friendly, if you want to ask questions, all questions are answered clearly, it makes me feel comfortable." (Interview by Widiawati, November, 2024).

The presence of youth who actively serve the congregation shows an increase in the number of visitors and the diversity of activities from worship to hospitality, it also shows that this mosque has succeeded in attracting wider community participation.

Meanwhile, the impact on the surrounding youth is marked by the enthusiasm to participate in routine studies held by this mosque, because the material is interesting and in accordance with the style of young people coupled with devotional sessions delivered by preachers from among young people. This indicates that the study program initiated by the Baitullah pillar has succeeded in making the trend of young people to return close to the mosque.

The Free Premium Coffee Bar program is also an attraction for young people. In addition, this program can restore youth attachment to places of worship by maintaining worship and reading the Qur'an. This reflects the application of Joachim Wach's theory of religious expression, where this program successfully connects ritual aspects with social aspects so as to create a balance between the spiritual and social needs of worshipers. Meanwhile, the kitchen for sharing program reflects organic solidarity where people with different backgrounds such as traders on the edge of the mosque

and people around come together and connect through religious values and togetherness. As expressed by one of the surrounding communities:

> "*Alhamdulillah*, the service at this mosque is very good and friendly. I eat here, the food is delicious, clean, and everyone is like a friend to me." (Kang Ilhan, Interviewed by Widiawati, February, 2025).

This statement reflects the value of inclusiveness and egalitarianism in religious social services. This concept emphasizes that the mosque is not only a place of formal worship, but also a social space that embraces all groups without distinguishing social status.

In addition, the author found another interesting phenomenon related to visitors' responses to the condition of the mosque that was under renovation. Some worshipers or visitors canceled their intention to stop by after learning that the mosque was in the process of renovation. When the mosque caretaker welcomed and directed them to the prayer area, visitors refused by saying they only wanted to take pictures.

This shows that the motivation of some visitors when visiting the One Million Youth Mosque is not only based on aspects of worship, but also on the aesthetic value and visual appeal of the mosque. This phenomenon reflects the shifting function of mosques in the digital era, where mosques also function as destinations that have aesthetic value and social media appeal (Kasim, 2019)(Kasim, 2019). The refusal to worship at mosques suggests that for some people, the visual experience takes precedence over the spiritual aspect. The findings also highlight the challenge for mosque managers in maintaining a balance between religious functions and religious tourism appeal, especially in the face of visitors who are more oriented towards visual experiences than religious activities.

Referring to the data obtained, there are several main patterns in the impact of the social service programs of the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda. The mosque applies broad social openness, ensuring that every individual, regardless of social and economic background can benefit from the programs available. In addition, the mosque has also succeeded in creating a welcoming environment for various groups by combining religious functions and social needs, such as the Free Premium Coffee Bar facility that attracts young people to visit the mosque more often.

Based on the results of the research, the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda shows a form of change that is in line with Emile Durkheim's concept. This mosque has adjusted its role as a center of social and spiritual life with an inclusive and modern approach. Thus, the changes that occur in the environment around the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda are in line with Durkheim's theory regarding the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity. The mosque is no longer just a place of worship in the traditional form, but also a dynamic and adaptive social space. In addition, the interaction between mosque administrators and visitors shows the dynamics in the motivation to visit and the perception of the mosque's function, indicating that the convenience of the facility influences visitors' decision to stop by.

The findings provide insight that a modern, data-driven mosque management model can significantly increase congregational participation and create sustainable governance. This approach has the potential to restore the mosque's role as a dynamic center of Islamic civilization and is relevant to the needs of today's ummah by applying it to other mosques.

Discussion

This study explored the social service programs at Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, focusing on its management structure, service delivery, and the impact on the surrounding community. The mosque operates with five main pillars—Baitullah, Baitul Qur'an, Baitul Maal, Baitul Muamalah, and Baitul Ukhuwah—which collectively embody its vision of becoming a center of civilization. These pillars reflect the mosque's role as a place of worship, education, economic empowerment, and social solidarity. Additionally, the management structure is professional and youth-driven, highlighting the active involvement of young people in decision-making and program implementation. Through flagship initiatives like the Free Premium Coffee Bar, Traveler Friendly Mosque, and Food Sharing Kitchen, the mosque fosters inclusivity and community engagement, attracting diverse groups from all walks of life. The mosque's transparency in financial management and its strategic use of technology further strengthen its operational efficiency and sustainability. The results underscore the mosque's role in revitalizing the local community, particularly through its social programs that have improved social cohesion, youth participation, and overall welfare.

The findings of this study can be understood through the lens of the theoretical framework established in the research argument, particularly through the perspectives of Nurcholish Madjid, Joachim Wach, and Emile Durkheim. First, in alignment with Nurcholish Madjid's concept of the mosque as a center of Islamic civilization, this study challenges the traditional view of mosques as mere spaces for ritual worship. Madjid (2019) emphasizes that mosques should address not only the spiritual needs of the community but also their social and cultural needs. The case of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda reflects this expanded role, as the mosque integrates five core pillars that combine religious functions with social services, education, and economic empowerment. This integration underscores the mosque's capacity to fulfill both the spiritual and social needs of its community, embodying Madjid's vision of mosques as dynamic centers of civilization that are responsive to the evolving demands of society.

Further support for this approach can be found in Joachim Wach's theory, which stresses that religious practices are not solely individual or ritualistic but are also inherently social and organizational in nature (Wach, 1994). This theoretical perspective is evident in the case of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, where religious practices are not confined to individual worship but are organized to foster social interaction and community development. Programs such as the Free Premium Coffee Bar and the Food Sharing Kitchen not only provide essential services but also facilitate social interaction, youth engagement, and community cohesion. These programs align with Wach's assertion that religious institutions must serve as organizational centers for social life, where individuals come together for collective purposes beyond ritual worship. The mosque's emphasis on inclusivity and engagement with younger generations further reinforces the idea that religious spaces must evolve to meet the broader social needs of their congregations.

Additionally, the findings of this study can be interpreted through the lens of Emile Durkheim's theory of the differentiation of social functions within modern society. Durkheim (2016) argued that as society becomes more complex, institutions, including mosques, must adapt by professionalizing their management and functions to meet the diverse needs of the population. The management structure of Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, which

is characterized by a clear division of roles, the use of modern technology, and a focus on operational efficiency, reflects Durkheim's notion of institutional adaptation. By adopting a professional management system and integrating digital tools for transparency and accountability, Masjid Sejuta Pemuda has positioned itself as a mosque capable of responding to the complex challenges faced by contemporary communities. This professionalization ensures that the mosque is not only a place of worship but also an effective institution for community welfare, capable of meeting both spiritual and social demands.

This study offers a novel contribution to the literature on mosque management and its social functions by integrating modern management practices, technology, and youth leadership, an approach not deeply explored in previous research. Prior studies, such as those by Al-Krenawi (2016) and Kurjono et al. (2022), emphasize the role of mosques in providing social services through zakat and waqf management, contributing to poverty alleviation. These studies highlight the pivotal role of mosques as centers for social empowerment. The findings in this study are consistent with this perspective, demonstrating that mosques are not solely places of worship but also serve as centers for social activities, addressing social issues like poverty and economic inequality. However, this research differentiates itself by highlighting the integration of technology in mosque social service management, which has been underexplored in existing literature. The study shows that technology integration can enhance transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in mosque-based social programs, particularly through digital fundraising and data-driven management systems, a dimension not thoroughly addressed by earlier studies.

On the issue of youth participation in mosque activities, several studies, including those by Bagaskara et al. (2024) and Suyuti & Fitriani (2022), identify a decline in youth involvement, often attributed to a lack of awareness regarding the mosque's broader social role. These findings suggest that while many mosques attempt to engage youth, they have not fully succeeded in offering programs that align with the needs and lifestyles of younger generations. This study adds a new perspective by examining how Masjid Sejuta Pemuda successfully attracts youth through technology-driven social services and relevant programs, such as the Free Premium Coffee Bar and modern discussion spaces. Unlike previous research, this study demonstrates that technology, such as the use of social media and digital

platforms, can be an effective tool for connecting youth to mosque activities—an aspect previously underrecognized in the literature.

Furthermore, regarding the integration of technology in mosque management, previous research by Sutono & Risyan (2023) and Firman & Basri (2023) has discussed how digitalization can improve accessibility and transparency in mosque operations, particularly in financial management and administration. However, the application of technology to social service management within mosques remains limited. This study introduces a more holistic model of mosque management that leverages technology to manage social services, such as through data-driven social mapping and digital fundraising initiatives, a new approach in this field of research. The findings suggest that mosques, by adopting modern technology, can achieve greater transparency, increase community participation, and create more sustainable and efficient management models.

Thus, the primary distinction of this study lies in its incorporation of technological innovation in mosque social service management, alongside youth leadership in the development of programs that are aligned with the community's needs. The contribution of this research to the literature is evident in its comprehensive integration of these elements, which have not been thoroughly explored together in prior studies. The findings suggest that future mosques, especially those embracing modern management practices and technological integration, can play a more significant role in social empowerment and community development, making them increasingly relevant in the face of social and technological change in the digital age.

The findings of this study contain important meaning in the social and ideological context, namely that Masjid Sejuta Pemuda has a strategic role in the implementation of social religious services in modern society. The success of the youth-dominated management structure shows that the younger generation is able to take an active and effective role in mosque management, in line with Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts that place youth as agents of change with the spirit and idealism to build a better society (Madjid, 2019). This indicates a paradigm shift that the mosque is no longer just a place of worship, but has transformed into a centre of social activities oriented towards community welfare. The social service programme run by the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda also has significant social implications, namely

being able to bridge the socio-economic gap between the mosque and the surrounding community. This reflects the creation of a sustainable social structure, where the mosque and the community are interconnected in building common welfare. In addition, the joint awareness between mosque administrators and the community in managing religious social service programs strengthens the mosque's function as a centre of social life as well as a centre of Islamic civilization. This is in line with the idea of mosque revitalisation put forward by Nurcholish Madjid, namely making the mosque the centre of inclusive and progressive community life (Madjid, 2019). Thus, this research contributes to a broader understanding of the strategic role of mosques in social development based on religious values and the active involvement of the younger generation.

The results of this study reveal both the positive functions and potential dysfunctions of implementing religious social services in mosques. On the positive side, the research highlights how social services can raise public awareness and promote community engagement, transforming mosques into inclusive centers for social activity. This shift also strengthens solidarity among worshippers, fostering deeper social connections within the community. However, the study also identifies significant challenges, notably the resource limitations that many mosques face. Relying heavily on donations and alms—funds that are inherently unstable and unpredictable—creates financial uncertainty and impedes long-term planning for social service initiatives. As noted by Kurjono et al. (2022), mosques often struggle with sustaining operations due to limited financial resources, which further complicates the maintenance and development of facilities and the expansion of social programs. The lack of structured maintenance and professional management, as highlighted by Mohammed et al. (Mohammed et al., 2024), accelerates the deterioration of mosque facilities, affecting their capacity to serve as stable hubs for social services. These findings underscore the urgent need for mosques to diversify their funding sources—through waqf (endowments), commercial ventures, or digital donation systems—and adopt professional management practices in both finance and facilities. Such strategies would enhance the operational sustainability and social impact of mosque services, making them more resilient to external financial fluctuations.

The study also emphasizes the risks associated with mosques' reliance on donations to fund their social service programs. While donations are crucial for supporting mosque operations, their irregularity and unpredictability pose significant risks to the long-term sustainability of social services. As observed in studies by Yasoa' et al. (2019) and Batool et al. (2019), mosques often struggle with securing consistent funding due to the voluntary nature of donations, which can fluctuate based on external factors such as economic conditions or public sentiment. This dependence on external donations limits the ability of mosque managers to plan effectively for the future and scale their social programs to meet growing community needs. Furthermore, the reliance on voluntary contributions prevents mosques from achieving financial independence, which is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of services in the long term. To mitigate these challenges, it is critical for mosques to explore alternative revenue streams. As Suhairi et al. (2021) suggest, mosques could better leverage waqf (endowments) or explore commercial opportunities, such as renting out space for community services or launching educational programs. Moreover, the integration of digital donation platforms could increase the frequency and volume of donations, potentially stabilizing the mosque's financial resources. Therefore, a strategic shift towards diversified funding models and more professional financial management could reduce the risks associated with dependence on donations, ensuring the long-term viability of mosque-based social services.

A further significant challenge identified in this research is the burden placed on mosque managers, who are tasked with balancing the mosque's core religious functions with the demands of managing social service programs. Mosque administrators are responsible for overseeing religious activities, such as prayers and religious education, while also managing social programs aimed at poverty alleviation, community engagement, and educational initiatives. Studies such as those by Aneesh et al. (2024) reveal that mosque management committees (MMCs) often struggle due to a lack of professional training and expertise in managing both religious and social service activities. This dual responsibility can lead to managerial fatigue and operational inefficiencies, particularly when mosque committees are not equipped with the necessary resources or skills to manage complex programs. The workload burden is compounded by the fact that mosque

committees often lack specialized knowledge in areas such as facilities management, financial planning, and community outreach. As a result, the effectiveness of social service programs can be diminished, as the managers' capacity to balance these diverse roles is stretched thin. Additionally, providing training and capacity-building programs for mosque committees would help alleviate the pressure on mosque managers, ensuring that both religious and social functions are carried out effectively. Strengthening digital tools and management frameworks could also enhance the efficiency of mosque operations, supporting managers in their complex roles.

Based on the findings of this study, several policy actions are necessary to address the challenges identified in mosque management, particularly in the context of social service programs. First, mosques should diversify their funding sources to reduce dependence on unstable donations, exploring opportunities such as waqf (endowments), commercial ventures, and digital donation platforms. This will help ensure a more stable and sustainable financial base for mosque operations. Additionally, the implementation of professional management practices is essential to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of mosque services. This includes integrating specialized personnel, such as professional facilities managers and financial advisors, to improve the maintenance of mosque facilities and the management of resources. Furthermore, mosque management committees (MMCs) should receive comprehensive training and capacity-building programs to equip them with the necessary skills to balance religious and social responsibilities effectively. These programs should focus on areas such as financial management, community outreach, and program development. Finally, strengthening digital tools and management frameworks will help streamline operations, improve transparency, and increase community engagement. By adopting these strategies, mosques can better navigate the complexities of social service delivery, ensuring long-term sustainability and maximizing their impact on the community.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded and taken as the main lesson that the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda has a strategic role in providing social and religious services that are relevant to the needs of modern society. The implementation of various social programs, such as rest areas, daily food

kitchens, and other social activities, has proven effective in increasing solidarity among worshipers and strengthening the mosque's function as a centre for social and religious activities. Another important finding shows that the modern management approach applied in this mosque contributes greatly to improving access to social services, although it is still faced with challenges such as limited resources and funding sustainability. In addition, the integration of religious values in every social activity proved to be an important foundation in building harmony and togetherness in the neighbourhood, making the mosque not only a place of worship, but also a space for community togetherness and empowerment.

This research makes a significant scientific contribution to the study of religious social services by offering a new perspective on the role of mosques as centres of community welfare. The main contribution of this research lies in strengthening the concept that the function of the mosque is not only limited as a place of worship, but also as a social institution that is able to adapt to the needs of modern society. Through an examination of the implementation of various social programmes at the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, this research presents a model of mosque social service management that can be replicated by other mosques in strengthening their role in the community. In addition, this research produces a new approach that emphasises the importance of synergy between mosque managers, congregants, and other stakeholders in building an inclusive and empowered environment. As such, this study broadens the scope of mosque studies in the contemporary social context and provides a theoretical and practical foundation for the development of future religious social services.

The main limitation of this research is its focus on only one case study, namely the Masjid Sejuta Pemuda, so that the findings do not necessarily represent the dynamics of religious social services in other mosques with different characteristics. As a consequence, this research has not been able to provide a general or comparative picture between various types of mosques. Therefore, it is recommended that future research conduct comparative studies of several mosques with diverse social and managerial contexts to gain a broader and more representative understanding. In addition, the qualitative approach used in this study provides in-depth insights, but has not been able to quantitatively measure the long-term impact of social services on community welfare and social cohesion. Therefore, future research could

adopt a mixed methods approach by incorporating quantitative data to provide a more comprehensive analysis. Future studies should also consider external factors such as government support and regulations that play a role in optimising the function of mosques as sustainable social service centres.

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The Grey Area of Religiosity: How Indonesian Young Muslims Negotiate Their Identity Amidst Extremism, Moderatism, and Popular Culture

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Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi dinamika keberagamaan generasi muda Muslim Indonesia di tengah kontestasi ideologis antara ekstremisme dan moderatisme yang terus berlangsung secara dialektis. Artikel ini disusun melalui kajian pustaka terhadap literatur ilmiah, konten digital, dan representasi budaya populer, lalu dianalisis secara kritis-deskriptif. Temuan menunjukkan adanya 'wilayah abu-abu' dalam ekspresi religius anak muda, yang mencerminkan posisi ambivalen, gamang, dan adaptif sebagai bagian dari masa transisi psikososial mereka. Alih-alih berpihak pada kutub ekstrem atau moderat secara mutlak, anak muda justru membentuk ekspresi keberagamaan yang cair, kontekstual, dan sering kali kontradiktif. Budaya populer dan media digital menjadi arena utama dalam proses negosiasi identitas religius mereka, dengan algoritma digital turut membentuk pengalaman spiritual secara sistemik dan kompleks sebagai sebuah kondisi yang dapat dikategorikan sebagai *wicked problem*. Dalam konteks kajian *youth culture*, fenomena ini memperlihatkan pencarian bentuk baru kesalehan yang berbaur dengan nilai-nilai modernitas. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada pengenalan konsep "wilayah abu-abu keberagamaan" sebagai kategori analitis baru dalam studi Islam kontemporer serta integrasi budaya populer dan teknologi digital dalam memahami religiositas generasi muda Muslim.

Kata Kunci: Wilayah abu-abu keberagamaan; anak muda muslim; ekstrimisme; moderatism; budaya populer.

Abstract

This article explores the religious dynamics of the Indonesian young Muslim generation amidst the ongoing dialectical ideological contestation between extremism and moderatism. The article is a literature review of scholarly archive, digital content, and popular culture representations, and then critically analysed. The findings suggest a 'grey area' in Indonesian young Muslims'

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religious expression; reflecting ambivalent, ambiguous and adaptive performance as part of their psychosocial transition. Instead of totally embracing either the extreme or moderate poles, Indonesian young Muslims construct a fluid, contextualised and often contradictory religiousity. Popular culture and digital media become the main arena in the process of negotiating their religious identity, with digital algorithms helping to systemically shape spiritual experiences as a complex condition that can be categorised as a wicked problem. In the context of youth culture studies, this phenomenon shows the search for new forms of piety that blend with the values of modernity. The uniqueness (novelty) of this research lies in the concept of 'grey areas of religiosity' as a new analytical category in contemporary Islamic studies as well as the integration of popular culture and digital technology in understanding the religiosity of Muslim youth, particularly in Indonesia.

Keywords: grey area of religiosity; ambiguity; young muslims; extremism; moderatism; popular culture.

Introduction

In the scholarly map of contemporary Islamic studies, a new dynamic has recently emerged that shows the tendency of academic research to become more diverse, reflective and cross-disciplinary. This phenomenon is reflected in the number of scholars, including academics from Indonesia, who examine various aspects of recent religious developments. These studies include the emergence of new religious authorities (Kailani, 2019), scholars' views on the concept of the nation-state (Burdah et al., 2019; Hasan et al., 2019), the trend of hijrah among young Muslims (Qomaruzzaman & Busro, 2021; Sunesti et al., 2018; Triana et al., 2021; Widhana, 2019), and the proliferation of religious expression (Fealy & White, 2008), particularly in the digital space (Díez Bosch et al., 2017; Waliyuddin, 2019). In addition, a number of studies have also highlighted the growth of religious social movements (Wiktorowicz, 2012; Yukich & Braunstein, 2014) and the growing interest in Islamic literature among the millennial generation (Hasan et al., 2018). These phenomena mark that religious expressions and discourses are no longer monopolised by formal institutions, but spread through new actors and increasingly wide-reaching digital channels.

Post-1998 socio-political conditions have also enriched the contestation of religious discourse in Indonesia. Along with the strengthening of democratisation, there is also a large current in socio-religious dynamics that leads to conservatism (Van Bruinessen, 2013), even in some cases escalating

into some forms of radicalism (Azra, 2002; Bruinessen, 2002; Turmudi & Sihbudi, 2005) and religious extremism (Bamualim, 2018; Ikhwan & Kailani, 2021; Kailani & Ikhwan, 2021). However, at the same time, there is also a counter-wave that promotes the values of pluralism, cosmopolitanism and religious moderation. These two poles continue to challenge, negotiate and influence each other in the social and intellectual space of Indonesian society, especially among the younger generation who are strategic actors in the discourse. In the midst of this shift, it is important to question the position of Indonesian young Muslims as agents in between these two major currents (extremism and moderatism).

The results of the PPIM UIN Jakarta survey in October 2017 reinforce the urgency of this study. There are 2,181 respondents from 34 provinces consisting of teachers, students, and university students, 37.71% stated that jihad means war (*qitāl*) (Saputra, 2018). This finding raises concerns about the strengthening of extreme views among the younger generation. However, a deeper reality shows that the flow of extreme religious ideology has not fully dominated. Moderate narratives still have room for representation. This indicates a complex and dynamic push-pull process, which if not seriously examined, has the potential to cause 'fractures' in the religious behaviour of Indonesian young Muslim generation (Fahrurrozi, 2016; Hasan, 2018; Hasan et al., 2018; Lukens-Bull, 2005).

The religious behaviour of young people basically cannot be simplified into an extremist versus moderate dichotomy, because in reality it is strongly influenced by a complex configuration of social factors. The interweaving of influences such as family environment, education, globalisation, digital media, identity politics, and modernisation contribute to forming a pluralistic and multifaceted religiosity. Psychologically, the adolescent developmental phase, which is characterised by identity search, cognitive openness (David & Tony, 2007), anxiety and uncertainty, also shapes their responses to various religious discourses. This complexity makes their religious expressions not always ideological, but rather the result of a process of negotiation, identity formation, and adaptation to the conditions of the times. Therefore, it is important to study this phenomenon in depth, in order to understand not only the direction of young people's religious movements, but also the future potential of the religiousity of Indonesian society at large.

The study of young Muslims and religiosity has become a concern in various socio-religious studies. In general, previous research can be grouped into three main themes. First, the theme of religious authority and changes in Islamic discourse shows that post-Reformation 1998, there was a significant fragmentation of religious authority. Fealy and White and Bruinessen highlight the emergence of new religious authorities, including conservative and radical groups that reshaped the landscape of Islamic discourse in Indonesia (Fealy & White, 2008). Zuhri also asserts that political openness and globalisation have created spaces for contestation of authority (Zuhri, 2022). However, these studies have not specifically examined the position of young people as active subjects in this contestation. A second aspect of young people's religiosity is revealed by studies that emphasize their religious expressions in the digital sphere. Pam Nilan and Carles Feixa put forward the concept of networked society, which explains network-based religiosity (Nilan & Feixa, 2006). Zahara et.al and Zamzamy examine the phenomenon of digital hijrah among Indonesian Muslim women (Zahara et al., 2020; Zamzamy, 2019), while Ayu maps the digitalisation strategy of da'wah from Salafi and moderate groups (Ayu, 2020). Although relevant, these studies focus more on the media and performative aspects without fully linking them to the ideological tensions between extremism and moderatism. Third, a number of studies address the negotiation of identity between piety and modernity among Muslim youth. Parker and Nilan show the idiosyncratic and irreducible character of the religious expressions of Indonesian youth (Parker & Nilan, 2013). Asef Bayat, through the concept of youthfulness, explains how Middle Eastern youth claim their religious space (Bayat, 2010). Sunesti et.al and Misbah examine the practice of 'branding piety' in Indonesia's urban Muslim population (Sunesti et al., 2018). Despite enriching the understanding of religious identity, these studies have not explored the position of Indonesian young Muslims in the tension between two conflicting ideological currents.

Thus, there is a void in the academic literature that fully discusses how Indonesian young Muslims negotiate their religious identity in the midst of two currents of extremism and moderatism. Not many studies have revealed the 'grey areas' in young people's religious behaviour that emerge from the dialectic between the two. This complexity is exacerbated by the presence of new media and its algorithms that form a digital religious ecosystem. This gap

is the main reason for the urgency of this research, as an effort to fill the knowledge gap that has not been adequately explored in the existing literature.

This research aims to fill the void of studies that have not specifically examined the position of Indonesian young Muslims in the midst of the discourse battle between extremism and moderatism in the contemporary religious landscape. Unlike previous studies that focus more on single expressions such as hijrah, salafism, or youth culture in general, this research will describe the dynamics of ideological and cultural negotiations that occur in the younger generation in response to the two opposing currents. Specifically, it will discuss the grey areas in young people's religious behaviour, born out of the reciprocal dialectic between religious conservatism and cosmopolitanism, and how digital mediation and local socio-cultural contexts shape their religious expressions. As such, this research contributes to expanding the understanding of the complexity of young people's religiosity and offers a new perspective on the formation of their religious identity in the digital era and globalisation.

Based on the dynamics of religious discourse contestation between extremism and moderatism, it can be assumed that the religious expressions of Indonesian young Muslims do not fully side with either pole absolutely, but rather tend to form a "grey area" that is the result of social, cognitive and cultural dialectics. The initial hypothesis in this study states that exposure to digital media and global information flows contributes significantly to shaping the ambivalent religious patterns of the younger generation, combining elements of piety with modernity values. In this context, the main variables examined are the influence of digital media algorithms, young people's social experiences (including education, family environment, and socialisation), and value orientations (such as tolerance and exclusivism). As such, this study proposes that the complexity of young people's religious expressions is a product of negotiations between traditional heritage, modernisation and contemporary mediatic structures. This assumption is supported by the studies of Asef Bayat, Pam Nilan, as well as survey data such as that conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta, which shows a symptom of ambivalence in the religious perceptions of the younger generation (Bayat, 2010; Nilan, 2017b; Saputra, 2018).

This research method uses a qualitative approach (Sugiyono, 2012) through a literature study to examine how the religious expressions of Indonesian young Muslims are formed in the midst of extremism and moderatism. The main focus of the research is on various sources of text and cultural representations that reflect the religious attitudes and behaviour of the younger generation, such as scientific journal articles, books, research reports, and community documentation. This method was chosen because it is suitable for understanding phenomena that are socio-cultural in nature and cannot be measured numerically. Data was collected by reading and analysing in depth various relevant and current literature materials, then examined to find the main themes that illustrate the dynamics of young people's religious attitudes. The results of the reading were critically analysed to capture general trends as well as specific patterns that emerged, especially in describing the grey area between pious values, modernity and popular lifestyles.

Results and Discussion

Cultural Hybridity and Ambiguity in Young People's Identity

The younger generation psychologically experiences a stage of development that Elizabeth B. Hurlock (Hurlock, 2012) describes as a stormy and stressful phase, which in German is referred to as "*sturm und drang*". In this phase they experience various life challenges as well as the search for identity to become an adult. One of the significant processes experienced by young people, in R. Larson's terminology, is the "restructuring of consciousness" (Larson, 1984). They climb a psychological ladder characterised by a transitional process from entropy (a condition of consciousness that has not been neatly organised or is still chaotic) to negentropy (a state of consciousness that has been well arranged) (S. W. Sarwono, 2016). In Gordon Allport's elaboration, there are three special phases in youth: the first, extension of the self (self-expansion); the second, self objectification (the ability to assess itself in a more objective way); the third, unifying philosophy of life (absorbing and integrating a philosophy of life) (W. S. Sarwono, 2010). These three gradual processes in turn help to weave patterns of cognition, viewpoints, and behavioural decisions.

When it comes to young people's attitudes and views, they are often in a position of ambivalence, uncertainty and doubt because they are naturally

psychologically on a transitional bridge. A concrete example of this can be examined in PPIM's findings, where today's young people, especially Gen Z, are "a confused generation". Their religious beliefs and "intolerant opinions" and "radical thoughts" are quite high, but at the same time, their "intolerant actions" and "radical acts" are low (Syafruddin et al., 2018). Such an ambiguous pattern agrees with the existence of a dynamic phase of cognitive opening, although in consistency it still does not appear to be consistent. A number of internal circumstances that cause it, among others, are the tendency of young people's realistic character coupled with the need for security and stability (Dwidienawati & Gandasari, 2018).

Their passion when surveyed regarding religiosity, the results show that they have a realistic view, although when verified, their actions lack aspects of intolerance and radical elements. This suggests that young people do not want to involve themselves outside of a sense of security and tranquillity. The life motivations of young people, in general, are relatively similar, such as working hard, getting a good profession, accumulating money, being able to buy the things they want, and living a happy life (Nilan, 2017a). Moving on from here, if highlighted through a global perspective, young people in the current era at certain moments are indeed surrounded by a sense of uncertainty, anxiety about tomorrow, and various insecurities which make young people's mindsets closer to fulfilling basic needs or survival. Supported by digital technology infrastructure, the tendency of young Indonesians to be more fluid, if communicating to the point, reluctant to bother (representation of instant culture or simplicity) (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008), and at the same time, experiencing ambiguity in determining attitudes.

This ambiguity can be found in various expressions of young people ranging from lifestyles, mixed interaction patterns, ways of communication, and expressions as well as their religious opinions. Especially for Gen Z who have become residents of the digital world (netizens), they are seen as having a different personality style from their predecessors. Yasraf Amir Piliang has observed a symptom of being "alone in a crowd" (solitary) in the latest young people. Cyber culture, in Yasraf's eyes, progressively or slowly, contributes to shaping the tendency of narcissism or *egophilia* beyond their love for their society or *sociophilia* (Piliang, 2017b). Perhaps this seemingly pessimistic narrative can be observed in the trend on social media, where many issues of self-love and the like have emerged. Although there are levels that must be

strictly separated between self-love and egophilia, it can be an early predictor of Yasraf's argument.

While a contrasting and different review can be read from Don Tapscott's elaboration. There are at least eight distinctive aspects of the current generation that distinguish them from the baby boomer generation. The first is freedom, the second is customisation, the third is scrutiny, which indicates the disposition of attention to detail so that the current generation is engaged in visual communication design or creative decoration services both online and offline. The fourth one is integrity; the fifth is collaboration which has become prevalent in this digital era, and the sixth is entertainment, which shows that fun is always important to young people. Seventh, speed is reflected in various online transactions, instant culture, and interaction processes that greatly cut time and fold space (with the existence of new media). Lastly, innovation (Tapscott, 2009). Tapscott sees an optimistic side that can be expected in today's young people who are involved in digital spaces and more often play the role of initiators, creators, and are collaborative.

In a similar narrative, Timothy Leary himself articulates that today's generation is more inclined to accept the concept of *kubernetes* and tends to reject the idea of *gubernetes* (Leary, 1994). Young people today are relatively more likely to choose freedom, self-navigation, celebrating the freedom of life, or in a more familiar phrase called "standing on your own feet" (*berdikari*). Meanwhile, the concept of *gubernetes*, which means directing, controlling, managing, structural governance, is not suitable for their lifestyle. This is in line with the phase of self-identity experimentation in young people. They go through a process that opens up the potential for the formation of a dynamic, multiple, albeit unstable self. Palfrey and Gasrey formulate the phenomenon as "multiplicity of self" (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). It is an attempt by young people to develop multiple selves so that they can express themselves according to the different contexts in which they exist.

The series of elaborations on young people are in principle interconnected with the ongoing global constellation. The movement of time since globalisation, the digital world, and the various historical elements that unite societies into a large network in the modern century all contribute to knitting the sociological mosaic in a particular society. Cultural crossover,

multilateral relations between countries, industrial boom, political-economic atmosphere, and international trade all contribute to the risk of mixing and clashing. Assimilation, negotiation, amalgamation, segregation and polarisation are the paradoxical logical consequences of contemporary phenomena.

In the field of socio-cultural science, this is commonly discussed in the domain of multicultural, intercultural, cosmopolitanism studies and cross-civilisation studies. One accentuation point that is often examined today is "cultural fusion" (Thomas, 1995) or also widely called "cultural hybridity". The process, called hybridisation, is an active cultural operation between local and global factors, hegemonic components and sub-alterns, centres and edges, but on the other hand it is also positioned as a process of cultural transactions that reflect how global culture has been assimilated and permeated in certain localities in various areas of the world (Nilan & Feixa, 2006). The process of integration can be observed in various forms, such as music, fashion, lifestyle, architecture, and also in the socio-religious affairs of young people in Indonesia. This, in Maruta Herding's description, is a natural consequence that occurs as a result of mondial intersubjective relations (world wide scale) and reaches various regions (Herding, 2013).

It is not surprising, then, to find expressions of young Muslims in Indonesia that blend the values of piety, local cultural manners, with the lifestyles and consumption patterns of contemporary modern currents. An obvious example can be found in the phenomenon of Muslim women who wear multi-coloured hijab with innovative and fashionable designs (Hidayat, 2012). Such a religious panorama is also the result of the fusion of various elements, from the value of piety in Islam, local culture, and modern contemporary fashion, which then gives birth to a new face that is distinctive so that it requires discernment with different benchmarks and perspectives. So, when observing the tendencies of Indonesian young Muslims today, reinforced by the inevitability of the times called cultural hybridity, the effort to read the phenomenon of "discourse war" between the two opposing poles must also include the connection.

Between Extremism and Moderatism: Pop-Culture as a Meeting Spot

As a common understanding, here the description of extremism is certainly not limited to violent-extremism alone, but also includes other

variants of ideological gradations (spectrum) that lead to acts of violence, one of which is radicalism (Porta & LaFree, 2012). If traced historically, the study of horizontal religious conflicts throughout human civilisation, John R. Hall considers that it has occurred long before entering the current third millennium era. The debate over discourse and ideology of competing cultures and collective physical clashes in the socio-religious landscape has long been an inherent part of the dynamics of the times (Juergensmeyer et al., 2013). So the current phenomenon of extremism that often highlights acts of violence in the name of religion has actually been going on for a long time in history. Nowadays, the complexity is more sophisticated with the vehicle of documentation, news media, cyberspace and various types of media that disseminate a series of events that will have an impact on psychosocial as well as reaping responses from the public.

Reflecting on this, an international discussion on violence was held by the United Nations after the 9/11 tragedy which included many experts from a number of countries (Jacobsen, 2017). The points agreed to be the roots of violence in the forum include poverty, disease or epidemic attacks, lack of hope, illiteracy, social inequality, marginalisation and exclusion, political pressure, violation of basic rights, group disappointment, hunger, cultural rejection, uncertainty of life orientation, and frustration. This explanation shows that the problem of extremism itself is not within the scope of just two or three fields such as social, religious, and educational for example. It is even more complex and intertwined with other multidomains and intricately intertwined.

This complexity demands analytical judgement when observing, for example, suicide bombings, partisan jihadist groups, and prisoners among Indonesian youth. A case study documented in the form of a documentary film entitled *Jihad Selfie* (Ismail, 2016), for example, captures two young Indonesians (Akbar and Wildan) who were moved to join ISIS. An astonishing motive is that some of them joined because they wanted to look masculine by carrying weapons and waging jihad (Samosir, 2016). From this fact, it can be found that in addition to the pull factor, the internal drive (push factor) in young people also contributes greatly to their participation in the extremist group movement. Moreover, it is related to masculine conceptions, narcissistic passions, and almost no ideological aspects. This was the case when the eccentric news reported by VICE media about young Taliban troops

in Afghanistan, the majority of whom were still in their teens to twenties, were photographed having a holiday at Qargha Lake in Kabul (Champion, 2021). They were even caught taking selfies while still carrying weapons, enjoying their leisure time, wearing fashionable clothes, and enjoying the post-Taliban occupation tourist atmosphere of the Afghan government. There is a fun aspect to the coverage, and as young people, fun is a necessity for them.

On the opposite side of the extremist group, Indonesian young Muslims are also encouraged to respond by narrating inclusive, moderate and tolerant religious values. Counter-culture efforts from young people have emerged through many community platforms and communication media in cyberspace. Countering violent extremism initiatives are widespreading like mushroom everywhere, especially after the active role of the press, government, and educational institutions that echo the discourse of religious moderation. In the light of my own thesis research, this kind of community movement represents at least three main triggers: collective consciousness, the imagination of a common enemy (as a result of the hyper-reality that has been thrust upon us), and youth claims (Waliyuddin, 2021). Nationally, there are many communities working in this field, ranging from BNPT's Ambassadors of Peace (*Duta Damai*), Wahid Foundation, PeaceGen, Gerakan Islam Cinta (GIC), Young Interfaith Peacemaker Community (YIPC), Forum for Interfaith Harmony (FKUB), Sekodi or School of Peace, Srikandi Lintas Iman, Jari Lima, Jakatarub, and small communities and circles that pay attention to issues of peace and religious moderation.

From these two poles of 'correspondence' that are at odds with each other, engage in discursive clashes, contradictory concepts of justice, and various other differences, the common point lies in their ability to perceive, consume, and enjoy pop-culture. These two camps, despite their opposing views and attitudes, secretly agree on one thing in common: *fun*. Although *fun* can be very subjective, one of the things that gives them fun is through pop-culture, whether in the fields of music, film, fashion, ways of communication in online media and the like.

Despite arguing over religious understanding, most Indonesian young Muslims from both the extremism and moderatism camps are equally able to enjoy modern music regardless of genre. To mention a concrete illustration,

from the extremist Muslim women's side and the moderate Muslim women's side, although both disagree on the conception and meaning of religious doctrines, they can secretly enjoy Korean dramas and K-Pop music in their respective homes. On the men's side, the two opposing camps are in fact enjoying campursari dangdut music and watching *One Piece* anime together. This portrait, in the most minimal level, suggests that even though they are separated by extremism and moderatism, they are bridged by popular culture that has spread in the community.

Indonesian Young Muslims in the Grey Area of Religiosity: Between Inconsistency and Adaptation

Looking at the current demographic map of Indonesia, it cannot be denied that the younger generation plays a vital role in the formation of social identity and the future direction at national scale. Based on the latest statistics, of Indonesia's total population of 270.20 million, 53.81 per cent are young people. This number includes generation Y or millennials for around 25.87%, and generation Z dominates with 27.94% (BPS, 2021). This means that more than half of Indonesia's population are young people. There are more than a hundred million. Most of them are Muslims, so then young Muslims are a significant group in reading the dynamics of religion and the direction of the nation's social future.

The importance of further examining the religious character of Indonesian young Muslims is not only based on their large numbers, but also on the social and psychological dynamics that accompany them. Changes in behaviour, mindset and religious perspectives in this circle often do not follow rigid and established ideological lines as assumed by many people. Instead of being monolithic, this younger generation shows a tendency towards ambivalence and incongruence between religious opinions, beliefs and actions. This incongruence does not necessarily reflect value inconsistency in a negative way, but can also be interpreted as a form of adaptation to the rapidly changing and complex social environment.

In social reality, Indonesian young Muslims now live in a religious atmosphere that is not singular. They grow up in a trajectory of attraction between the discourses of extremism and moderatism, traditionalism and modernism, even between narcissistic tendencies and altruism. But interestingly, in the midst of the tension between the poles of the discourse,

a new space of contestation and negotiation emerges that can be called "a grey area". This is not just a transition zone, but a space where two extremes can meet without producing a sharp clash. In this context, popular culture is one of the main channels that allows this meeting to occur naturally and peacefully.

Popular culture plays a major role as an arena for self-actualisation for today's Muslim youth. In the midst of the swift flow of information and the flood of discourse from various digital channels, they are not only passive consumers, but also active agents in shaping new meanings of their religiosity. They become part of a networked society that lives in a digitally connected social atmosphere. In this context, Jean Baudrillard uses the term "implosion", which describes a situation when humans no longer physically expand the world, but instead experience an explosion of information that merges into the space of the self intensively (Piliang, 2017a).

This implosion phenomenon has an impact on the psychosocial condition of young Muslims who often feel confused, anxious, and vacillating in determining life attitudes, including in religious matters. In many cases, their maturity in thought and spirituality have not yet been fully formed. This makes them vulnerable to the influence of radicalism with a shallow understanding; while at the same time, opening up opportunities for counter-narratives that are not yet fully established or comprehensive.

For example, many young Muslims who previously had no in-depth knowledge of Islam suddenly experience a surge of interest in religious issues, even with an extreme spirit of jihad. However, this enthusiasm is often not accompanied by a strong and complete theological foundation. On the other hand, there are also young people who are trying to develop moderate counter-narratives. However, they are often still coloured by methodological confusion, and do not yet have a systematic perspective. This is where it appears that their seemingly inconsistent behaviour is actually more accurately read as an adaptive response to the complex realities of the times.

This kind of condition requires researchers, educators, and policy makers not to rush to label the Muslim youth or young Muslims as inconsistent or religiously shallow. Instead, there needs to be a more in-depth effort in reformulating the approach to the study of "Muslim youth culture" in Indonesia. The approach must consider the sociocultural context and the

dynamics of information technology that greatly influence the way of thinking and behaviour of today's young generation. Their religious culture cannot be equated with the previous generation or with Muslim youth in other countries, because it has unique contours and backgrounds.

In addition, this grey area in young people's religious attitudes needs to be interpreted as a fertile field for academic exploration. It is precisely in these spaces that lies the potential for dialogue, integration, and innovation in a more inclusive and contextual way of religion. This grey area can be a meeting point between normative Islamic values and universal human values that develop in modern society. In other words, this grey area does not signify a value vacuum, but instead is an important arena of cultural experimentation for the future of Indonesia and the religiosity of its citizen. Through drawing map of the religious patterns and psychosocial conditions of Indonesian young Muslim generation, the direction of future social and religious development can be more accurately designed. The younger generation is not only the inheritor of the future, but also the main actor in creating the future itself. Therefore, understanding the nature of their thoughts and spirituality, including their grey areas, is an important step in shaping a nation (nation-building) that is peaceful, tolerant and adaptive to the changing times.

Discussion

This research reveals the religious dynamics of Indonesian young Muslims who are in a complex psychosocial and cultural condition. The findings show that young people, especially Gen Z, experience an ambiguity of their identity due to the intersection of Islamic values, local culture, and the influence of globalisation and digital technology. They do not show absolute consistency between religious opinions, beliefs and actions, but this is more accurately understood as an adaptive response to the times. Amidst the push and pull of the discourses of extremism and moderatism, they occupy a 'grey area' of religiosity that is not merely transitional, but a space of productive contestation and negotiation. Popular culture becomes a meeting spot across ideological poles and becomes a medium for self-actualisation of the younger generation. This finding confirms that the religiosity of Indonesian young Muslims (and Muslim youth in general) is dynamic, pluralistic and contextual, and requires a more flexible and cross-disciplinary approach to understanding it fully.

The high dynamics of Indonesian young Muslims religiosity in this study can be explained as a result of complex interactions between psychosocial factors, local culture, and the influence of digital globalisation. The ambiguity experienced by young people, especially Gen Z, arises because they are in the midst of competing value streams, on the one hand Islamic values and local traditions inherited from families and communities, and on the other hand global values brought by digital media and popular culture. Inconsistency between religious opinions, beliefs and actions is not an indication of weakness of faith, but rather a form of adaptation to the plurality of values and the demands of the times. The "grey area" they occupy reflects the ideological contestation space between extremism and moderatism, which opens up opportunities for a more reflective and flexible negotiation of identity. Popular culture serves as a bridge because it can accommodate both religious symbols and expressions of individual freedom. Therefore, the relationship between these concepts, between identity, values, media, and expression space, is the basis for understanding that youth religiosity is dynamic, pluralistic, and contextual, thus demanding a cross-disciplinary approach that is sensitive to social change.

The results of this study are in line with previous findings showing that young people's religiosity tends to be fluid and contextualised. For example, studies by Supandi, Mahmud, Basri and Azzahra found that Indonesian young Muslims show a tendency towards unorthodox religiosity, where their religious expressions are influenced by popular culture and social media (Azzahra, 2024; Basri, 2023; Mahmud, 2024; Supandi, 2025). Similarly, studies by Zuhri, Rustandi, Ilham and Saumantri et.al highlighted a shift from doctrine-based patterns of religiosity towards more reflective and personalised ones, especially among Gen Z (Ilham, 2022; Rustandi, 2020; Saumantri et al., 2023; Zuhri, 2021). However, in contrast to previous studies that tend to emphasise aspects of deviation or deconstruction of traditional religiosity, this research actually places the dynamics as "a form of adaptive response" to the complexity of the times, not as a form of weakening faith.

This research also makes a novelty contribution by emphasising the importance of seeing the "grey area" of young people's religiosity not only as a transitional space, but as a productive arena of contestation and negotiation of identity. In addition, this study integrates psychosocial and cultural analyses more explicitly in explaining the ambiguous identity experienced by

young Muslims, which has not been studied in depth in previous studies. Thus, the cross-disciplinary approach used in this research offers a more holistic perspective to understand the religiosity of Indonesian young Muslims in the digital era and globalisation.

The results of this research contain significant social and ideological meanings in understanding the religious landscape of Indonesian young Muslims, especially Gen Z. Amidst the complexity of psychosocial conditions, local cultural influences and digital globalisation, it appears that their religiosity is not static or normative, but rather reflects an active and dynamic process of identity search. Inconsistency between religious opinions, beliefs and actions is not a sign of weak religiosity, but a reflection of their efforts to negotiate competing values. Ideologically, their position in the "grey area" between extremism and moderatism indicates the formation of a new space of contestation in religious expression, which actually enriches the treasures of Islamic religiosity in Indonesia.

Socially, popular culture functions as an alternative space that accommodates religious expression as well as freedom of individual identity, showing that digital media is not only a channel of information, but also an arena for the formation of new religious meanings. The historical implication is that this phenomenon reflects a shift in the religious paradigm from doctrinal and institutional forms to a more fluid, personal and contextual model. Thus, this research contributes to the broadening of understanding of Indonesian Muslim religiosity by emphasising the importance of a cross-disciplinary approach that is sensitive to social, cultural and technological changes in framing the religiosity of today's youth.

The results of this study have significant implications for the understanding of the religious expression of the younger generation of Indonesian Muslims in the contemporary socio-cultural context. Functionally, these findings open up new space for a more inclusive, flexible and contextualised approach to religious education and religious policy. The ambiguity of identity experienced by Gen Z can be used as a starting point to build a religious discourse that is more reflective, open to dialogue, and relevant to their life experiences. Popular culture, although often considered banal, turns out to function as an effective medium to convey Islamic values in a format that is more acceptable to the "digital generation". However, there

are also some limits in this portrait. Inconsistencies between opinions, beliefs and actions can blur the line between 'authentic' religious awareness and mere pragmatic tendencies. The 'grey' space of religiosity, if not guarded with a critical approach, has the potential to be exploited by extreme discourses that wrap themselves in popular packaging. In addition, without proper mentoring, openness to various values can lead to deeper identity confusion. Therefore, this research encourages the importance of developing a religious education strategy that is not only normative, but also dialogical and interdisciplinary, to navigate this religious dynamic in a constructive direction.

Based on the research findings on the religious dynamics of Indonesian young Muslims, policies and strategic actions are needed that are able to respond to the complex, dynamic and contextual conditions of Gen Z's religious identity. First, educational and religious institutions need to develop more inclusive, dialogical and contextual religious learning curricula and methods, which not only emphasise dogma, but also reflective skills and the ability to negotiate multiple identity. Second, the government and religious organisations need to encourage spaces for creative expression, such as popular culture forums and digital media, as educative and participatory tools that allow young people to authentically and constructively express their religiosity. Third, training and mentoring is needed for educators and young preachers so that they are able to bridge Islamic values with the challenges of digital modernity without being exclusive or judgemental. Fourth, religious moderation policies that have been initiated by the state need to be contextualised specifically into the digital lives of young people, through multi-stakeholder collaboration between the state, civil society and social media platforms. Thus, the policy response to this phenomenon must be cross-sectoral and cross-disciplinary, in order to support the growth of healthy, tolerant and adaptive religiosity among the younger generation.

Based on the findings regarding the dynamics of Indonesian young Muslims religiosity in the grey area between inconsistency and adaptation to the times, holistic and contextual policy measures are needed. First, the government and educational institutions need to develop a religious curriculum that is more responsive to the social and psychological realities of young people, with an interdisciplinary approach that integrates religious education, digital literacy, and strengthening the values of tolerance and

nationality. Secondly, relevant ministries need to collaborate with communities and youth organisations to organise participatory and non-doctrinal religious guidance programmes, in order to create a safe dialogue space for young people's religious expressions. Third, there needs to be policy support for the production and distribution of moderate and contextualised religious digital content, through cooperation between the government, religious influencers and digital creative industry players. Fourth, research institutions and universities are expected to actively conduct mapping and longitudinal studies on the development of young people's religious identity, in order to provide accurate data for the formulation of long-term policies in the fields of education, religion and youth. With these actions, the grey area of young people's religiosity is no longer seen as a problem, but as an opportunity to shape the peaceful, open and contextual face of Indonesian Islam in the future.

Conclusion

This research reveals that the religious expressions of Indonesian young Muslims represent a complex dynamic that cannot be explained through conventional approaches that focus on motives, devian behaviour, or resistance to social structures. Instead, their religious expressions reflect a process of searching for spiritual stance that takes place in a transitional space between tradition and modernity, between moderatism and extremism, and between religious values and popular culture. Young people appear with religious practices that are not always ideologically consistent, but instead show a creative synthesis between normative piety, local cultural heritage, and contemporary lifestyles of pleasure and consumption. In this context, their religious expressions cannot be classified in black and white, but are more accurately understood as a form of adaptation and symbolic negotiation of the diversity of religious discourses—as part of cultural evolution—that fight each other in the public sphere. This finding confirms the need for a more transdisciplinary methodological and conceptual approach to reading the phenomenon of young people's religiosity as a whole, namely by combining the perspectives of religion, culture, transitional sociology, and the dynamics of digital media as a new space for the formation of religious meaning.

The significant contribution of this research to the development of contemporary Islamic studies lies in the depiction of grey area of religiousity among younger generation of Indonesian Muslims. The concept of grey area of religiousity can be employed as a new analytical category that explains the position of young people in the middle of the tug-of-war between extremism and moderatism. This concept offers a new framework for understanding youth religiosity not in a binary (moderate-extreme) way, but rather as a dynamic and contextualised process of identity negotiation. In addition, this research introduces the mediation variables of popular culture and the influence of digital algorithms as important factors in shaping the religious expressions of today's youth, two variables that have not been systematically studied in the study of religiosity. In terms of approach, this research also integrates psychosocial and cultural analyses with a critical-reflective literature study method, thus providing an interdisciplinary approach model that can be used in similar research. Thus, this research not only enriches theories about youth religiosity, but also opens up new questions about how digital media, popular culture and psychosocial conditions shape the face of Islam in the era of globalisation.

Although this research has succeeded in revealing the dynamics of Indonesian Muslim youth religiosity in the context of contestation of extremism and moderatism and the presence of popular culture as a space for negotiating identity, there are a number of limitations that need to be recognised. Firstly, the approach used is entirely qualitative with a literature study method, so the findings rely heavily on the interpretation of available secondary sources. This limits the research's ability to capture empirical dynamics directly from the experiences of the research subjects, especially in the aspects of affection and daily religious practices. Secondly, time and access limitations mean that this research has not included an even representation of all demographic layers of Muslim youth in Indonesia, such as differences in geographical areas, social class, or educational background. Therefore, future research is recommended to adopt a mixed methods approach and conduct more in-depth field studies in order to capture the diversity of religious practices empirically and contextually. A longitudinal approach can also be used to see changes in young people's religious expressions in a sustainable manner over a period of time.

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Mapping the Sufi Ethics of the Self: A Study of Seven Virtues and Vices in *Serat Nitiprana* within Javanese Islam

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis sistem etika sufistik dalam *Serat Nitiprana* karya Kiai Yasadipura I dengan menelaah konstruksi tujuh sifat baik dan tujuh sifat buruk sebagai kerangka nilai ke-diri-an dalam konteks budaya Islam-Jawa. Studi ini merespons disorientasi moral dan krisis spiritual yang kian melanda masyarakat Muslim Jawa kontemporer dengan menggali kembali teks spiritual klasik yang memadukan ajaran tasawuf dengan strategi pedagogis lokal. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis teks, penelitian ini mengkaji struktur tembang macapat dalam naskah untuk mengidentifikasi pola simbolisme moral dan instruksi spiritual. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa *Serat Nitiprana* membangun kerangka etika yang bersifat dualistik secara sistematis: sifat-sifat baik seperti sabar, rendah hati, dan kesadaran diri diposisikan sebagai maqāmāt (tingkatan spiritual), sementara sifat-sifat buruk yang digambarkan sebagai dorongan nafsu dan godaan iblisiyah menjadi rintangan utama dalam suluk (perjalanan ruhani). Selain itu, teks ini juga menyusun visi tentang *insān kāmil* (manusia paripurna) melalui idiom-idiom simbolik seperti *sangkan paraning dumadi* dan *sedulur papat lima pancer*, yang menampilkan kosmologi sufistik khas Jawa. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa karya sastra sufistik klasik dapat difungsikan sebagai perangkat pendidikan moral dan spiritual yang kontekstual di tengah erosi nilai-nilai tradisional. Keaslian penelitian ini terletak pada pemetaan sistemik terhadap unsur moral yang saling berlawanan dalam *Serat Nitiprana*, yang berbeda dari studi-studi sebelumnya yang cenderung berfokus pada aspek historis atau filologis semata. Penelitian ini menafsirkan teks sebagai sistem etika sufistik lokal yang utuh dan masih relevan untuk diskursus pendidikan dan spiritualitas masa kini.

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Kata Kunci: Pedagogi budaya; insān kāmil; Islam Jawa; Serat Nitiprana; etika sufistik.

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the Sufi ethical system in *Serat Nitiprana* by Kiai Yasadipura I by examining the construction of seven virtues and seven vices as a framework of ethical selfhood within the Javanese-Islamic cultural context. The research responds to the growing moral disorientation and spiritual crisis among contemporary Javanese Muslims by revisiting a classical spiritual text that integrates Sufi teachings with local pedagogical strategies. Using a qualitative textual analysis approach, this study examines the macapat poetic structure of the manuscript to identify patterns of moral symbolism and spiritual instruction. The findings reveal that *Serat Nitiprana* systematically constructs a dualistic moral framework: virtues such as patience, humility, and self-awareness serve as progressive maqāmāt (spiritual stations), while the vices, framed as *nafs* impulses and satanic temptations, represent barriers in the *sulūk* (spiritual journey). Furthermore, the text outlines a vision of *insān kāmil* (the perfect self) through symbolic idioms like *sangkan paraning dumadi* and *sedulur papat lima pancer*, articulating a deeply localized Sufi cosmology. These results imply that classical Javanese Sufi literature can serve as a contextual tool for moral and spiritual education amid the erosion of traditional values. The originality of this study lies in its systematic mapping of oppositional moral elements in *Serat Nitiprana*, which, unlike previous historical or philological studies, interprets the text as a comprehensive and localized Sufi ethical system that remains relevant for contemporary pedagogical and spiritual discourse.

Keywords**:** *Cultural pedagogy; insān kāmil; Javanese Islam; Serat Nitiprana; Sufi ethics.*

Introduction

In recent decades, Javanese Muslim society has faced a profound crisis in ethical and spiritual orientation. This crisis is marked by the growing dominance of materialism, hedonism, and the increasing spiritual dryness within formal religious practices. Traditional values such as *nrimo ing pandum* (acceptance of one's destiny), *tepa selira* (empathy), and *memayu hayuning bawana* (harmonizing and beautifying the world) have been eroded by the forces of modernity and urbanization (Suciati, 2015; Tupan, Lattu, & Therik, 2022). Simultaneously, tensions between traditionalist and reformist Islamic groups have intensified the fragmentation of religious identity, leaving segments of the community in a state of religious ambiguity or even estrangement from Islamic values themselves (Ricklefs, 2007, 2012).

In this context, there is an urgent need to rediscover spiritual and ethical foundations rooted in local wisdom. One such source is the Sufi literary work *Serat Nitiprana* by R. Ng. Yasadipura I, which conveys teachings on self-awareness, the control of desire (*nafs*), and the ethical framework of seven virtues and vices as moral and spiritual guidance. Amidst the prevailing value disorientation experienced by Javanese Muslims, this text becomes highly relevant as an alternative reference offering a pathway toward self-awareness and spiritual perfection (Fauzi, 2012; Hefner, 2011).

A substantial body of previous studies has significantly contributed to understanding the intersection between literature and Sufism within Islamic traditions, particularly in the context of transmitting spiritual values through classical literary works. The first category of research focuses on the process of Islamization in Java through cultural integration. A key theme in the Islamization of Java, widely explored in scholarly work, is the emphasis on the fusion of Islamic values with local traditions. Studies on communities such as Penginyongan and Jalawastu demonstrate that cultural practices like *sedekah bumi* (earth-offering ceremonies), *lengger* (a traditional Javanese dance), and local ritual performances can undergo Islamization without losing their indigenous identity (Asrawijaya, 2022a). Symbolic and linguistic strategies, such as the use of the Javanese language in conveying Islamic messages, have proven effective in embedding Islamic values within local communities (Wicaksono, 2019). Additionally, artistic practices such as *wayang* (shadow puppet theater) have served as engaging and contextually relevant media for transmitting Islamic teachings (Rumbay, Siahaya, & Hutagalung, 2024). The interaction between Islam and local culture has not taken the form of conflict but rather manifests as a mutually enriching dialectical relationship (Susilo & Syato, 2016). The ongoing re-Islamization process, including the identity shift from *abangan* (nominal Muslims with syncretic beliefs) to *santri* (orthodox, observant Muslims), along with the role of youth as agents of religious transformation, further underscores the dynamic character of culturally grounded Islamization in Jawa (Nashir & Jinan, 2018; Parker & Nilan, 2013). However, these studies have yet to examine specifically how literary works such as *Serat Nitiprana* contribute to transmitting Sufi ethical values within this cultural framework.

The second category involves studies on Sufi ethics in Islamic literature, focusing on the moral and spiritual dimensions conveyed through both

classical and modern Sufi works. The literature consistently highlights that Sufi ethics are not solely grounded in adherence to *shari'a* (Islamic law) but also in the cultivation of inner character through spiritual practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God), *suluk* (spiritual journey or path), and *muhasabah* (self-reflection). Core concepts such as universal compassion (Heck, 2006), epentance and integrity (Khalil, 2023), and moral refinement (Kostadinova, 2023) emerge as central themes in Sufi literary texts. Works by figures such as Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi and Yunus Emre consistently use poetry as a pedagogical tool for instilling virtues such as compassion, sincerity, and the rejection of vices like greed and pride (Bardakçı, 2021). Furthermore, the aesthetic and symbolic dimensions of Sufi literature function as methods for character development and for achieving spiritual balance between the physical and transcendental realms (Karimi, 2024; Yazaki, 2014). Nonetheless, much of this scholarship remains focused on Middle Eastern and Central Asian literary traditions, leaving a significant gap in the study of Sufi ethical frameworks embedded within the literary texts of the Indonesian Archipelago, such as *Serat Nitiprana*. This gap calls for further exploration into localized Sufi ethics within the Javanese-Islamic context.

The third category centers on the moral transformation of Javanese Muslim society, a transformation shaped by a long process of integrating Islamic teachings with local cultural practices. Existing studies reveal that Islamization in Java has been adaptive and dialogical rather than confrontational—evident in interpretative works such as *al-Iklil* by Misbah Mustafa, which emphasize the harmonization of Islamic teachings with Javanese traditions (A. Supriyanto, 2024). Local rituals such as *slametan* (communal prayer-feast ceremonies) and *cowongan* (rituals invoking rain or blessings) are interpreted as expressions of deeply rooted Sufi religiosity within community life (Nasir, 2019; S. Supriyanto, 2023). The propagation of Sufism, brought by the *Wali Songo* (the Nine Saints credited with spreading Islam in Java) and orders such as *Qadiriyya* and *Naqshbandiyya*, has strengthened the ethical and spiritual dimensions of Javanese Islam while simultaneously offering a response to the challenges of modernity and religious radicalism (Rubaidi, Hilmy, Mas'ud, & Basyir, 2023; Sugahara, 2023). Historical research has further contested the notion that Islam was marginal within Javanese culture, demonstrating its substantial role in shaping the social and cultural structures of Java since the early phases of

Islamization (Ricklefs, 2014). However, there remains a scarcity of research examining how this moral transformation is symbolically and narratively encoded within local Sufi literary works such as *Serat Nitiprana*, signaling a critical area for further scholarly inquiry.

This study aims to analyze the system of Sufi ethics embedded in *Serat Nitiprana* by Kiai Yasadipura I by examining the seven virtuous traits and the seven vices as the moral and spiritual construction of the self (*ke-diri-an*) within the Javanese-Islamic cultural context. Furthermore, it interprets the text as a symbolic map of *suluk* (spiritual journey) leading toward the realization of the *insān kāmil* (the perfected human). This research addresses a significant gap in the existing literature by offering a thematic and Sufi-centered analysis of the moral and spiritual framework in *Serat Nitiprana*, which has thus far been predominantly explored through historical, philological, or practical applications without delving into its ethical system as a comprehensive teaching of self-transformation.

Considering the narrative structure and Sufi symbolism embedded in *Serat Nitiprana*, this study is grounded in the hypothesis that the text by R. Ng. Yasadipura I does not merely convey moral teachings in a normative sense but constructs a structured system of Sufi ethics. The text articulates the concept of *ke-diri-an* (the self) through cultural symbols, poetic verses of *tembang suluk* (spiritual songs), and the moral opposition between seven virtuous traits and seven vices, all of which form part of the spiritual process known in Sufism as *sulūk* (spiritual journey). This argument is supported by the theory of *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations) in Sufism (Al-Qushayri, 2007), which maps out the stages of the soul's journey—beginning with *taubah* (repentance), *ṣabr* (patience), *murāqabah* (self-vigilance), and culminating in *riḍā* (contentment). It is also reinforced by the concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) from the impulses of the *nafs al-ammārah* (the commanding self). Furthermore, the aesthetic and symbolic approach employed through the *tembang macapat* (Javanese poetic form) aligns with the pedagogical framework of Javanese-Islamic ethics (Dhofier, 1980; Woodward, 2011), in which Sufism is transmitted through local cultural media that are both communicative and reflective. Thus, *Serat Nitiprana* can be read as a distinctive representation of Javanese Islam that offers not only ethical values but also a spiritual methodology guiding individuals toward the realization of *insān kāmil* (the perfected human).

This study focuses on the unit of analysis in the form of *Serat Nitiprana* by R. Ng. Yasadipura I, a classical Javanese literary work rich in ethical and Sufi symbolism. The analysis centers on the representation of seven virtues and seven vices, which are narratively constructed in the verses of the *tembang* (Javanese poetic form), and how the text structures the concept of the self (*ke-diri-an*) within the tradition of Javanese Islamic Sufism. Thus, this research does not merely examine the normative moral content, but also explores the Sufi dynamics and pedagogical dimensions embedded in the text's poetic structure, cultural symbols, and themes of self-transformation.

This research employs a qualitative design with a textual analysis approach. This method was selected because it aligns with the nature of the object of study, which is literary, Sufi, and symbolic in character. Textual analysis provides the interpretive space to uncover hidden meanings within the language, poetic form, and cultural symbolism embedded in the text. This design allows for an in-depth exploration of spiritual meanings and ethical systems that cannot be accessed through purely literal or historical readings.

The primary data source in this study is the printed edition of *Serat Nitiprana* published by Dahara Prize in 1994. This text serves as the principal source, as it contains the original poetic verses that form the basis of analysis. In addition, this study draws on secondary sources, including classical Sufi works by Al-Qushayri and Al-Ghazali, studies on Javanese Islamic pedagogy (Dhofier, 1994; Woodward, 2011), as well as scholarly works on Sufism and Islamic literature from various Muslim cultural contexts. These sources provide theoretical grounding and enrich the interpretation of the Sufi structure within the text.

Data were collected through documentation and literature review techniques. The data collection process began with the transliteration and segmentation of the text into three thematic clusters: virtues, vices, and verses on the concept of the self. Each verse was then parallelized into three languages—Javanese, Indonesian, and English—to facilitate the identification of themes, meanings, and symbolic structures. This classification also served as the basis for data visualization in the form of synthesis tables that clarify the ethical and spiritual functions of each verse.

The final stage of this study involved thematic and interpretive analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring Sufi values in the text,

such as patience (*ṣabr*), contentment (*riḍā'*), repentance (*tawbah*), or satanic traits (*iblisiyah*). Meanwhile, the interpretive approach was used to uncover the symbolic meanings of the verses within the theoretical frameworks of *maqāmāt* (spiritual stages) and *tazkiyat al-nafs* (the purification of the soul). The analysis was carried out systematically, beginning with the identification of relevant quotations, thematic grouping, linking to Sufi theories, and finally, interpreting the findings within the context of Javanese Islamic culture.

Results and Discussion

1. *Serat Nitiprana* as a Sufi Text of Javanese Islam

Serat Nitiprana is an esteemed literary work that not only conveys ethical values but also functions as a spiritual guide within the Sufi tradition of Javanese Islam. Composed by R. Ng. Yasadipura I (1729–1803), the chief court poet of the Surakarta Palace during the reigns of Pakubuwono III and IV, this text has long been known and cherished by the Javanese nobility and aristocracy from the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries (Nasuhi, 2006, p. 211). The text examined in this study is the transliterated edition by Kamajaya, published by Balai Pustaka in 1979 and obtained from the Pustaka Nawaksara collection (Yasadipura I, 1979).

Rich with moral, spiritual, and cultural teachings, *Serat Nitiprana* is not merely a literary product but serves as a *kitab*—a manual of life designed to shape character (*budi pekerti*) and cultivate the self (*ke-diri-an*) holistically. True to its name, *Nitiprana* is derived from two Javanese words: *niti*, meaning 'guidance' or 'regulation,' and *prana*, meaning 'heart,' 'feeling,' or 'inner sense' (Mardiwarsito, 1979, p. 113; Poerwadarminta, 1939, p. 346).

The ethical and spiritual guidance contained within *Serat Nitiprana* covers various aspects of human conduct, including patience (*ṣabr*), sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*), gratitude (*shukr*), perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge, self-restraint, and the rejection of greed and egocentrism. These values are conveyed through the medium of *tembang suluk*—Javanese mystical poetry—making the text not only communicative but also contemplative. The poetic form serves as both a mnemonic and a spiritual vehicle, ensuring that the moral teachings are easily internalized and deeply felt within the hearts of its readers or listeners.

In this study, the focus of analysis is directed toward the *pupuh Dhandhanggula* section of *Serat Nitiprana*, which consists of 48 *pada* (stanzas), each containing 10 *gatra* (lines) bound by traditional rules of *guru wilangan* (syllabic count) and *guru lagu* (rhyme or melody). The *Dhandhanggula* meter is traditionally associated with a phase of life in which individuals begin to establish familial harmony, realign their way of living, and temper their egocentric tendencies (Sulaksono, 2016, p. 84; Sutardjo, 2016, p. 35). This symbolic resonance aligns with the Sufi function of *Serat Nitiprana*, which aims to guide its readers through the process of inner refinement, self-recognition, and the cultivation of mature spiritual character.

Beyond its role as a literary text, *Serat Nitiprana* positions itself as a *kitab suluk*—a spiritual manual expressed through the medium of local Javanese culture—intended to guide the younger generation in developing virtuous character (*akhlak mulia*) and living with deep spiritual awareness. The repetitive structure and rich symbolism of the *tembang* serve as pedagogical tools to facilitate the internalization of ethical values, much like the traditional teaching methods found in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). In this way, the work stands as an important cultural legacy that harmonizes Islamic Sufism, Javanese indigenous wisdom, and traditional educational methodology within a single aesthetic and spiritual framework.

2. The Seven Virtues in *Serat Nitiprana*

This section outlines the seven virtues (*sifat baik*) constructed by R. Ng. Yasadipura I in *Serat Nitiprana* as the moral foundation for Javanese Muslims. The analysis is conducted through a philological-textual approach to the *macapat* verses that explicitly convey Sufi ethical teachings. The primary text under examination is the *Serat Nitiprana* edition transcribed by Kamajaya, published by Balai Pustaka in 1979, and sourced from the *Pustaka Nawaksara* collection. In this study, the verses from the *pupuh Dhandhanggula* are analyzed to identify the spiritual values and inner ethics that shape the construction of the self (*ke-diri-an*) within the framework of Javanese Islamic Sufism.

The first of the seven virtues articulated by R. Ng. Yasadipura I in *Serat Nitiprana* emphasizes the importance of patience (*ṣabr*) and openness of heart when facing suffering. This virtue is conveyed in stanza 7 of *pupuh Dhandhanggula*, lines 6 to 9 (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21), which teaches that

one should respond to adversity with kindness and remain open-hearted toward others. The tri-lingual translation of this key stanza is presented in table 1, highlighting how the original Javanese text conveys profound Sufi ethical values that stress emotional resilience, compassion, and spiritual generosity.

Table 1 Emphasizing Patience and Compassion as Core Virtues in Javanese Sufi Ethics

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
yen katekanan balak,	*Bila mendapat musibah,*	When struck by calamity,
ing sariranipun,	*Dalam dirinya sendiri,*	Upon himself,
winales ing kabecikan,	*Dibalasnya dengan kebaikan,*	He responds with kindness,
mring kabuka marang ing sasami sami	*Dan ia bersikap terbuka kepada sesama manusia.*	And remains open-hearted toward others.

This stanza portrays the ideal character of a Javanese Muslim who embodies patience (*ṣabr*), openness of heart, and compassion, even when faced with hardship or adversity. Responding to misfortune or suffering with kindness reflects both self-control and spiritual strength, which, in the Sufi tradition, is regarded as an essential part of the process of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul). Furthermore, such openness toward others reflects the values of *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance) and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood), which serve as fundamental pillars of Sufi social ethics.

Thus, this stanza underscores the importance of ethical responses to personal suffering: not by complaining or assigning blame, but by extending compassion and kindness to others. This represents the manifestation of the *maqām* of *ṣabr* in Sufism, which is not merely about passive acceptance, but about actively responding with spiritual goodness. As Al-Ghazali (2005) emphasizes, patience is the essential foundation of all *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations), serving as the prerequisite for ascending through subsequent stages of spiritual development.

The second virtue in *Serat Nitiprana* centers on self-awareness and humility. This value is reflected in stanza 8 of *pupuh Dhandhanggula*, lines 2 through 7 (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21), as presented in Table 2.

Table 2 The Second Virtue in Serat Nitiprana: Self-Awareness and Humility (Stanza 8, Lines 2–7)

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
kaping kalih mantep idhepira,	*Kedua, teguh dan mantap dalam kesadarannya,*	Second, firm and steady in his awareness,
ingkang beciki awake,	*Ia menyadari kebaikan orang lain kepadanya,*	He recognizes the kindness others have shown to him,
lan weruh sriranipun,	*Dan mengetahui dirinya sendiri,*	And knows his own position,
yen wong luhur dipun andhapi,	*Meskipun berhadapan dengan orang mulia,*	Even when facing a noble person,
tur nora palacidra,	*Ia tidak menyakiti atau mengkhianati*	He does not harm or betray
marang saminipun,	*orang-orang di sekitarnya*	those around him

This stanza emphasizes the importance of an individual's ability to recognize the goodness of others and to maintain a proportional awareness of their own position and standing. Such awareness forms the foundation of *tawāḍuʿ* (humility) and *ʿadālah* (justice toward oneself and others) within the Sufi ethical framework. A person who upholds this virtue will not boast before those of higher status and will consistently preserve harmonious relationships with others, avoiding harm or betrayal.

In the Sufi tradition, this virtue is closely related to *murāqabah*, the continuous awareness that human beings live under God's watchful gaze and must therefore be vigilant in both conduct and thought. Furthermore, the ability to know oneself (*maʿrifat al-nafs*) is considered the initial step toward attaining *maʿrifatullāh*, or the deeper knowledge of God. Thus, this stanza teaches not only social ethics but also guides readers toward cultivating spiritual depth through self-awareness and self-control.

The third virtue in *Serat Nitiprana* relates to a strong inclination toward consistently performing good deeds and avoiding wrongful actions. This value is reflected in stanza 8 of the *pupuh Dhandhanggula*, lines 8 to 10 (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21), as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 The Third Virtue in Serat Nitiprana: Consistent Inclination Toward Good Deeds and Avoidance of Wrongdoing

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Dene tandha kaping tiga,	*Adapun tanda yang ketiga,*	The third sign,
iya karem wong iku panggawe becik,	*ialah bahwa orang itu senang melakukan perbuatan baik,*	is that the person enjoys doing good deeds,
nyimpang panggawe ala.	*dan menjauhkan diri dari perbuatan buruk.*	and avoids engaging in wrongful acts.

This verse illustrates that one of the primary characteristics of a virtuous person (*insān*) is their consistency in choosing righteousness and avoiding all forms of wrongdoing. From the perspective of Sufi ethics, this tendency does not arise spontaneously but is the result of *riyāḍah*—a continuous spiritual discipline aimed at subduing the lower self (*nafs*) and habituating oneself to righteous deeds.

The fondness for doing good (*karem panggawe becik*) and the rejection of evil actions (*nyimpang panggawe ala*) reflect the process of inner purification (*tazkiyatun nafs*), in which a heart that has been spiritually cleansed will naturally incline toward virtue. Within the framework of the *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations), this quality is closely associated with the *maqām* of *taqwā* (God-consciousness) and *iḥsān* (spiritual excellence)—that is, the continuous awareness and choice to pursue what is pleasing to God, not only on an outward level but also within the depths of one's inner being.

The fourth sign within the Sufi ethical structure constructed by R. Ng. Yasadipura I is *jatmika ing budi* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21), which literally means “having noble character” or “possessing inner courtesy.” This

expression appears in the first line of stanza 9 and portrays the character of an individual whose behavior is guided by courtesy, sincerity, and inner wisdom.

Table 4 The fourth ethical sign in Serat Nitiprana emphasizing noble character and inner courtesy

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Tandha ping pat jatmika ing budi	Tanda keempat adalah berbudi luhur	The fourth sign is having noble character

This stanza highlights the ethical significance of *jatmika ing budi*, which reflects the Sufi emphasis on *adab* (refined manners) as both an inner disposition and an outward behavior. In Javanese-Islamic ethics, having noble character is not limited to social courtesy but is viewed as an essential manifestation of inner spiritual refinement. The cultivation of *jatmika ing budi* shapes not only how one interacts with others but also how one disciplines the self in relation to God.

From a Sufi perspective, this ethical trait aligns with the practice of constant self-monitoring (*murāqabah*) and the commitment to embody virtues in every aspect of life. Courtesy and gentleness are not superficial social graces but serve as mirrors of the heart's purity. An individual who embodies *jatmika ing budi* demonstrates a balanced character, combining humility, sincerity, and calmness—qualities that are central to the spiritual journey toward *insān kāmil* (the perfected human being). As the Javanese poetic tradition emphasizes, this mannerly conduct reflects an ethical-spiritual unity where the outer behavior harmonizes with the inner self, thus fostering both social harmony and spiritual elevation.

The fifth of the seven virtues in *Serat Nitiprana* is articulated in stanza 9, lines 2–4 (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21). In this section, R. Ng. Yasadipura I emphasizes the significance of excellence in speech as a hallmark of a refined and knowledgeable character. An individual who embodies this fifth sign is described as *momot ujar*—someone who is open to receiving others' words and opinions, and who exercises careful discernment when speaking. Their

speech is never impulsive or careless but is always accompanied by *ngelmu*, meaning wisdom and thoughtful reflection.

This value underscores the Sufi view within Javanese Islam that the quality of speech mirrors the depth of one's spiritual state and self-control. Speech is not merely a social act but serves as a reflection of the heart's purity and the mind's integrity. In the ethical framework of Sufism, mindful and wise communication is considered an integral part of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (soul purification) and is closely associated with the attainment of *maqām ḥilm*—the spiritual station of forbearance, patience, and gentleness. By exercising restraint and wisdom in speech, an individual demonstrates both spiritual maturity and ethical refinement essential in the journey toward *insān kāmil*, the perfected self. The key elements of this fifth virtue are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 The Fifth Virtue in Serat Nitiprana: Receptiveness and Thoughtful Speech

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Momot ujar tandha kaping lima,	*Tanda kelima, mampu menampung ucapan atau menerima pendapat.*	The fifth sign is the ability to receive others' speech.
Ngucap barang pangucape,	*Dalam berbicara, ia berhati-hati dan mempertimbangkan perkataannya.*	He speaks carefully and with consideration.
Sarta kalawan ngelmu.	*Dan ucapannya selalu disertai ilmu atau kebijaksanaan.*	And his words are always accompanied by wisdom.

The sixth virtue, presented in stanza 9, lines 5–8 of *Serat Nitiprana* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21), underscores the importance of profound spiritual awareness of life, one's connection with God, and the inevitability of death. In this passage, R. Ng. Yasadipura I portrays an individual who delights in deep reflection (*karem amikir*), constantly engages in *istikfar* (seeking forgiveness), remains mindful of the true meaning of life, and consistently remembers mortality as an essential part of the spiritual journey.

This disposition reflects the *maqām muraqabah* in Sufi thought—a spiritual station characterized by continuous awareness of being under

divine watch. Through the habitual practice of *istikfar*, individuals cultivate moral vigilance, nurture inner humility, and maintain spiritual purity. The remembrance of death here is not fatalistic but serves as an ethical compass, reminding one to live life with propriety (*adab*), responsibility, and sincerity. Such self-awareness fosters not only individual piety but also guides ethical behavior within the community. The key elements of this sixth virtue are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6 The Sixth Virtue in Serat Nitiprana: Reflective Awareness and Remembrance of Mortality

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Tandha ping nem karem amikir,	Tanda keenam adalah senang merenung,	The sixth sign is fondness for reflection,
Tansah maca istikfar,	Selalu membaca istikfar,	Constantly reciting *istikfar*,
Eling uripipun,	Sadar akan makna hidupnya,	Aware of the meaning of his life,
Lamun awekasana pejah.	Dan ingat bahwa pada akhirnya ia akan meninggal dunia.	And remembering that in the end he will pass away.

The seventh and final virtue articulated in *Serat Nitiprana* appears in stanza 9, lines 9–10 (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 21). This section highlights one of the highest spiritual values in the journey of a *sālik* (spiritual seeker): the attitude of *riḍā'*, or sincere acceptance of life's trials and tribulations. Yasadipura I depicts an individual who, when faced with hardship (*prihatin*) or adversity, embraces it as a divine blessing (*nugraha*) from God. This attitude reflects profound spiritual maturity and inner clarity, representing the culmination of the *suluk* (spiritual path).

In the Sufi tradition, *riḍā'* is considered one of the loftiest *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations), attained after the levels of patience (*ṣabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), and trust in God (*tawakkul*). A person who reaches this state does not merely resign to suffering but actively perceives trials as opportunities for

drawing closer to the Divine. The acceptance of adversity without complaint reflects both spiritual serenity and unwavering faith. The essence of this seventh virtue is presented in **Table 7.**

Table 7 The Seventh Virtue in Serat Nitiprana: Acceptance of Life's Trials as Divine Blessing

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Kaping pitu kalamun nandhang prihatin,	*Ketujuh, ketika mengalami kesusahan atau penderitaan,*	Seventh, when experiencing hardship or sorrow,
Panrimaning nugraha.	*Ia menerimanya sebagai anugerah dari Tuhan.*	He accepts it as a blessing from God.

In the Sufi tradition, the *maqām* of *riḍā'* (contentment or acceptance) represents one of the highest spiritual stations, following the stages of patience (*ṣabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), and trust in God (*tawakkul*). A person who has attained *riḍā'* does not merely passively endure trials but views suffering as a means of drawing closer to the Divine. This virtue reflects a state of spiritual wholeness, guiding the individual to respond to divine destiny with serenity and unwavering faith, rather than with complaint or resistance.

The seven virtues constructed by R. Ng. Yasadipura I in *Serat Nitiprana* form the essential foundation of Sufi ethics within the Javanese Islamic context. Each virtue is conveyed through carefully crafted verses in the *pupuh Dhandhanggula*, with lines rich in meaning and spiritual symbolism. These virtues not only illustrate moral excellence in a normative sense but also serve as a spiritual roadmap guiding the reader through the process of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul) toward becoming the *insān kāmil* (the perfected human being). To clarify the meanings and the arrangement of these teachings, Table 8 summarizes the seven virtues as articulated in the text of *Serat Nitiprana*.

Table 8 Summary of the Seven Virtues in Serat Nitiprana

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation

Yen katekanan balak, ing sariranepun, winales ing kabecikan, mring kabuka marang ing sasami-sami.	*Bila mendapat musibah, dibalasnya dengan kebaikan, dan bersikap terbuka kepada sesama.*	When struck by calamity, he responds with kindness and remains open-hearted toward others.
Kaping kalih mantep idhepira, ingkang beciki awak, kan weruh sriranipun, yen wong luhur dipun-andhapi, tur nora palacidra marang saminipun.	*Kedua, teguh dalam kesadaran, mengenal kebaikan orang lain, tahu diri di hadapan orang mulia, dan tidak mengkhianati sesama.*	Second, firm in awareness, acknowledges others' kindness, knows his place, and does not betray others.
Dene tandha kaping tiga, iya karem wong iku panggawe becik, nyimpang panggawe ala.	*Adapun tanda yang ketiga, orang itu gemar berbuat baik dan menjauhi keburukan.*	The third sign, he enjoys doing good deeds and avoids evil actions.
Tandha ping pat jatmika ing budi.	*Tanda keempat, bersikap santun dan memiliki budi pekerti.*	The fourth sign, behaving with courtesy and noble character.
Momot ujar tandha kaping lima, ngucap barang pangucape, sarta kalawan ngelmu.	*Tanda kelima, mampu menampung ucapan orang lain, berbicara dengan bijak dan penuh ilmu.*	The fifth sign, receptive to others' speech, speaks wisely with knowledge.
Tandha ping nem karem amikir, tansah maca istikpar, eling uripipun, lamun awekasana pejah.	*Tanda keenam, suka merenung, selalu beristighfar, sadar akan hidup dan kematian.*	The sixth sign, thoughtful, constantly recites istighfar, mindful of life and death.

Kaping pitu kalamun nandhang prihatin, panrimaning nugraha.	*Ketujuh, ketika mengalami penderitaan, menerimanya sebagai anugerah Tuhan.*	The seventh sign, when suffering, he accepts it as divine grace.

In essence, the seven virtues outlined in *Serat Nitiprana* form the moral foundation of noble character that integrates social ethics and the spiritual values of Javanese Islam. The ideal individual is portrayed as someone who remains patient (*ṣabr*) when faced with adversity, responds to harm with kindness, maintains self-awareness without causing harm to others, consistently engages in good deeds, demonstrates courtesy and civility, speaks thoughtfully and with wisdom, regularly practices *istikfar* (seeking forgiveness) while reflecting on the impermanence of life, and ultimately accepts suffering as a divine blessing. These values reflect a harmonious synthesis of emotional intelligence, spiritual consciousness, and social decorum—guiding the individual toward personal perfection within both the Sufi framework and local Javanese cultural tradition.

From the analysis of these seven virtues in *Serat Nitiprana*, several distinctive and thematically consistent patterns emerge. First, there is a clear tendency toward reactive and affective ethics, characterized by the ability to respond to wrongdoing with goodness and to face suffering with equanimity. This pattern highlights the importance of self-restraint and patience (*ṣabr*) as spiritual responses to negative situations, reflecting both emotional maturity and spiritual depth. Second, the text exhibits a reflective awareness of the self and of social relationships, as seen in the emphasis on humility, non-harm toward others, and openness to differing viewpoints. This suggests that piety, as depicted in the text, encompasses not only vertical relations with God but also horizontal relations with fellow human beings. Third, a spiritual-transcendental orientation is evident through the habitual practice of *istikfar*, an acute awareness of death, and wholehearted submission to divine destiny (*riḍā'*). This pattern indicates that the ideal character envisioned by *Serat Nitiprana* is one who continuously purifies the self and lives in a state of heightened consciousness of life's transience. Fourth, the delivery of these values through *tembang suluk* (Javanese spiritual songs) and local symbolism

reflects a cultural pedagogical strategy that employs aesthetics as a medium for moral transmission.

The interpretation of the seven virtues in *Serat Nitiprana* reveals that this work does not merely convey moral teachings but constructs a structured and contextual Sufi ethical system within the framework of Javanese Islam. Virtues such as patience (*ṣabr*), humility, and acceptance (*riḍā'*) reflect spiritual stages consistent with the *maqāmāt* of Sufism, while simultaneously serving as the foundation for ethical character formation closely tied to the religious experiences of Javanese society. This aligns with the tradition of Javanese Sufism, which since the fifteenth century has developed a form of mysticism that prioritizes spiritual practice and self-transformation through local wisdom (Birsyada, 2020). The values embedded in this *Serat*—such as compassion, self-reflection, and the refusal to retaliate against wrongdoing—exemplify a Sufi ethical orientation that emphasizes social harmony and moral excellence (Bardakçı, 2021; Suharsono, Mustansyir, & Murtiningsih, 2020).

Furthermore, *Serat Nitiprana* integrates spiritual dimensions with cultural approaches through *tembang macapat*, positioning itself as a *kitab suluk*—a spiritual manual—that not only offers ethical guidance but also engages the aesthetic and emotional sensibilities of its readers. Suharsono et al. (2020), demonstrate that values such as forgiveness, as conveyed in *Serat Nitiprana*, possess both profound spiritual significance and function as tools for fostering inner peace. Thus, the findings of this study reinforce the understanding that Javanese Sufism shapes not only individual spiritual conduct but also serves as the ethical bedrock for building an inclusive, moderate, and culturally harmonious society (Anshori, Prasojo, & Muhtifah, 2021; Susilo & Syato, 2016).

3. Identification of the Seven Vices and Their Antithetical Function

Following the discussion of the seven virtues in *Serat Nitiprana*, which constitute the ethical foundation of Javanese Islamic Sufism, this analysis proceeds to explore their opposites—the seven vices that function as the antithesis to those noble values. While the virtues depict the spiritual stages that a *sālik* (spiritual seeker) must strive to attain, the vices represent inner obstacles that must be identified, controlled, and transformed throughout the *sulūk* (spiritual journey).

Within the textual context, these vices are portrayed not merely as moral deficiencies but also as spiritual disturbances arising from the impulses of the *nafs al-ammārah* (the commanding or base self). Symbolically, these negative traits are referred to as *budi ala ginoncang eblis*—a metaphor for the satanic agitation that disrupts the human psyche. Thus, engaging with this part of the text is essential for understanding the ethical dynamics of *Serat Nitiprana* as a comprehensive value system that not only guides toward goodness but also provides a map for recognizing and avoiding destructive tendencies within the self.

The first vice in *Serat Nitiprana* is explicitly described in stanza 10, lines 8–10. In this stanza, R. Ng. Yasadipura I (1979, pp. 21–22) writes (see Table 9):

Table 9 The First Vice in Serat Nitiprana: Pleasure in Harming Others and Reckless Speech

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Dhemene anganiaya,	*Senang menyakiti orang lain,*	Enjoys harming others,
Yen angucap wong iku adoh lan ngelmi,	*Bila berbicara, ia jauh dari ilmu dan pengetahuan,*	When speaking, he is far from knowledge and wisdom,
Sembrana amrih cacad.	*Ucapannya ceroboh dan menyebabkan kerusakan atau cela.*	His words are reckless and cause damage or disgrace.

This verse (Table 9) portrays an individual who not only derives pleasure from harming others (*dhemene anganiaya*) but also speaks recklessly, devoid of knowledge (*ngelmu*). Such carelessness in speech leads to harm and disgrace, reflecting the dominance of the *nafs al-ammārah*—the lower, commanding self that propels humans toward destructive actions both verbally and physically.

This vice directly contrasts with the Sufi virtues of *ḥilm* (gentleness) and *ʿilm* (knowledge), which are central to ethical conduct in Sufism. In the

context of *sulūk* (the spiritual path), this vice represents one of the initial spiritual obstacles that must be identified and overcome, as it signals a breakdown in basic ethical self-restraint and the unchecked influence of ego in social relations. By opening the discussion of vices with this example, Yasadipura underscores the fundamental importance of mindful speech and the control of harmful impulses as the first steps toward *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul).

The second vice in *Serat Nitiprana* illustrates arrogance and social exclusivity, reflecting a serious disruption in human relationships. In stanza 11, lines 1 to 3, R. Ng. Yasadipura I (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 22) depicts individuals who boast of themselves and avoid social interaction, trapped in the illusion of superiority. Such attitudes not only disrupt social harmony but also close the path to spiritual development, as a proud person finds it difficult to accept advice or correction from others. In the Sufi context, arrogance (*kibr*) is considered one of the greatest *hijab* (veils) that obstruct the attainment of *insān kāmil* (the perfected human), as it prevents total submission to the Divine Will and blinds one to the fundamental equality of all beings before God.

The verse describing this vice is presented in Table 10:

Table 10 The Second Vice in Serat Nitiprana: Arrogance and Social Exclusivity

Bahasa Jawa	**Bahasa Indonesia**	**English Translation**
Kapindhone digumunggung dhiri,	*Kedua, ia menyombongkan diri,*	Second, he boasts about himself,
Nora dhemen apawongsanakan,	*Tidak suka bergaul atau berkumpul dengan saudara atau sesama,*	Does not enjoy associating with kin or others,
Manawa asor dheweke.	*Karena menganggap dirinya lebih tinggi daripada orang lain.*	Because he considers himself superior to others.

This vice, as shown in Table 10, highlights the central Sufi teaching that pride is a dangerous spiritual barrier. True ethical refinement in Sufism requires the cultivation of *tawāḍuʿ* (humility) and the recognition of every soul's equal standing before the Divine. By identifying this vice, *Serat Nitiprana* guides the seeker (*sālik*) to practice self-effacement and openness—qualities essential for the transformative journey of the soul.

The third vice identified in *Serat Nitiprana* concerns the loss of *adab* (courtesy and proper conduct) in everyday behavior. In stanza 11, lines 4–5, Yasadipura I (1979, p. 22) refers to individuals marked by the absence of social grace—those who "*tatakrama den orak-arik*," meaning they fail to uphold decorum or actively disrupt established norms of civility. In the Javanese cultural context, where *unggah-ungguh* (etiquette) and *tatakrama* are central expressions of moral character, such behavior is seen as a profound deviation from noble values.

From a Sufi perspective, the erosion of *adab* reflects a weakened spiritual awareness. In Sufism, proper conduct is not merely a social obligation but a reflection of inner discipline that demonstrates reverence for both fellow human beings and God. The disruption of manners, therefore, signals a misalignment between outward behavior and the spiritual virtues necessary for the purification of the soul.

The corresponding verse is presented in Table 11:

Table 11 The Third Vice in Serat Nitiprana: Disruption of Social and Spiritual Decorum

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Dene kang kaping telu,	*Adapun yang ketiga,*	The third one is,
Tatakrama den orak-arik.	*Ia merusak tata krama atau tidak menjaga sopan santun.*	He disrupts manners or disregards proper decorum.

As seen in Table 11, this teaching underscores the integral role of external comportment as a mirror of inner refinement. In the path of *suluk*

(spiritual journey), the preservation of *adab* is essential for maintaining both social harmony and spiritual dignity.

The fourth vice described in *Serat Nitiprana* appears in stanza 11, lines 6–7, which states: *"Ingkang kaping sakawan, kereng sarta lengus* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 22). This phrase characterizes a person who is *kereng* (harsh or aggressive) and *lengus* (sullen or unfriendly in facial expression). In the realm of Sufi ethics, facial expressions and gentle demeanor reflect the clarity of heart and inner peace. Therefore, a person who is stern and unfriendly outwardly signals an imbalance within and a lack of spiritual self-restraint. Such a disposition contradicts one of the key *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations) in Sufism—*ḥilm*, which emphasizes compassion, patience, and kindness in interpersonal relations. In Javanese culture, soft speech and a warm facial expression are not merely social niceties but vital tools for maintaining communal harmony. As such, this trait is a sign of spiritual immaturity that obstructs the path of inner purification (*tazkiyatun nafs*) for the *sālik* (spiritual traveler).

The corresponding verse is detailed in Table 12 below:

Table 12 The Fourth Vice in Serat Nitiprana: Harsh Behavior and Sour Disposition

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Ingkang kaping sakawan,	*Adapun yang keempat,*	The fourth one is,
Kereng sarta lengus.	*Ia bersikap keras dan berwajah masam.*	He behaves harshly and has a sour or unfriendly expression.

The fifth vice in *Serat Nitiprana* is found in stanza 11, line 8, which reads: *"Ping lima jail wadulan"* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 22). This line describes a character who is *jail* (meddlesome or mischievous) and *wadulan* (fond of gossiping or spreading others' affairs, including sowing discord). In the ethical framework of Sufism, such behavior reflects spiritual immaturity and a destructive tendency that undermines social harmony.

In the Sufi tradition, guarding one's tongue is considered one of the essential aspects of *riyāḍah* (spiritual discipline), and behaviors such as *namīmah* (tale-bearing) and *ghībah* (backbiting) are regarded as serious sins. These actions erode the spiritual and emotional bonds between individuals and distance the perpetrator from the *maqām ṣidq* (station of truthfulness) and *ukhūwah* (spiritual brotherhood).

Within Javanese culture, *wadulan* is equally condemned as it violates the values of *eling lan waspada* (mindfulness and vigilance) and *tepa selira* (mutual respect and empathy), which uphold personal dignity and the sanctity of others' privacy. The relevant verse is presented in Table 13 below:

Table 13 The Fifth Vice in Serat Nitiprana: Meddlesomeness and Tale-Bearing

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Ping lima jail wadulan.	*Kelima, ia bersifat usil dan suka mengadu domba.*	Fifth, he is meddlesome and likes to sow discord.

The final two negative traits in *Serat Nitiprana*, the sixth and seventh, are presented in stanza 11, lines 9 and 10. These lines highlight behaviors that are spiritually and socially corrosive, effectively concluding the series of vices that stand in stark contrast to the seven previously described virtues. Together, they serve as the antithesis of sincerity (*ikhlās*) and steadfastness of heart, which are central teachings in Javanese Sufi tradition.

The ninth line in stanza 11—*"kaping neme angumpet panggawe becik"* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 22)—delivers a sharp critique of individuals who deliberately conceal their good deeds. At first glance, this behavior may appear to reflect modesty or humility. However, within the ethical framework laid out by R. Ng. Yasadipura I, this is categorized as a vice because it represents a failure to channel goodness as a contagious social energy. In the ethical framework of Javanese-Islamic Sufism, every virtuous action carries not only personal value before God but also social responsibility—namely, to serve as an example, to inspire others toward goodness, and to expand communal benefit.

In this context, the concealment of good deeds is not driven by a genuine desire to avoid *riyā'* (showing off) but rather by an unwillingness to share or a fear of losing personal advantage. This reflects subtle egoism (*ujub*), insincerity in intention (*niyyah*), and a weak sense of social trust (*amānah*). In Sufi ethics, withholding goodness that could illuminate and guide others is viewed as a form of spiritual dishonesty, as it hides the light that is meant to shine within the community. Thus, this behavior is not merely indicative of weak character but also serves as an obstacle to social transformation grounded in Sufi values.

The seventh and final negative trait in *Serat Nitiprana* is depicted in the line *"Dene kang kaping sapa, nora sabar katekan bilai"* (Yasadipura I, 1979, p. 22), which translates as "The seventh is impatience when struck by calamity." This attitude reflects an individual's inability to face trials or suffering with calmness and sincerity. From the perspective of Sufi ethics, this trait represents a deficiency in *ṣabr* (patience), one of the essential *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations) on the Sufi path (*sulūk*). Impatience signals a failure to accept the divine will (*taqdīr*) and constitutes a major barrier to spiritual maturity. Those who lack patience tend to fall into complaint, despair, and blame—whether directed at circumstances or at others—thus distancing themselves from *riḍā* (contentment) and *tawakkul* (trust in God).

In the Sufi worldview, life's trials serve as opportunities for spiritual purification. Failing to cultivate patience means missing the deeper wisdom and spiritual refinement that can emerge from hardship. This seventh vice, therefore, represents the culmination of the seven negative traits, highlighting the profound gap between such individuals and the readiness of the soul to return to God in full awareness and acceptance.

The original lines from *Serat Nitiprana* along with their Indonesian and English translations are presented in Table 14.

Table 14 The Seventh Negative Trait in Serat Nitiprana

Bahasa Jawa	Bahasa Indonesia	English Translation
Dene kang kaping sapa,	*Adapun yang ketujuh,*	As for the seventh,

Nora sabar katekan bilai.	*Tidak sabar ketika tertimpa musibah.*	Does not show patience when afflicted by calamity.

As the culmination of the ethical discourse on the seven negative traits in *Serat Nitiprana*, Kiai Yasadipura I offers a transformative counsel that serves as the spiritual climax of the text. This section not only warns readers about the immense dangers that arise when these vices are left unchecked, but also gently guides them toward the path of salvation through the application of *pitutur* (moral advice) that has been previously conveyed. With a tone both tender and authoritative, Yasadipura speaks as a spiritual teacher addressing his disciple, inviting the reader to internalize the deeper meaning of these teachings and to embark upon the journey back to the Divine Essence (*Dzat Mahasuci*) with full awareness and sincerity. The complete textual excerpt that encapsulates this closing spiritual counsel is presented in Table 15

Table 15 The Closing Spiritual Counsel In Serat Nitiprana

Bahasa Jawa	**Bahasa Indonesia**	**English Translation**
Pan wus jangkep kang sapta prakara,	*Setelah lengkaplah ketujuh perkara itu,*	Once the seven matters have been completed,
Iku pancabaya gedhe,	*Itulah sumber bahaya besar,*	That is a great danger,
Rasakna putraningsun,	*Rasakanlah, wahai anakku,*	Feel it, my child,
Marang kojah kang wuri-wuri,	*Terhadap ajaran yang memperingatkan di belakang,*	Toward the counsel that follows behind,
Kalamun sira bisa,	*Jika engkau mampu,*	If you are able,
Matrapken pitutur,	*Menerapkan nasihat ini,*	To apply this guidance,

Kang wus kasebut ing ngarsa,	*Yang telah disebutkan di bagian awal,*	That has been stated previously,
Iku badan umarek mring Mahasukci,	*Maka dirimu akan berjalan menuju Dzat Mahasuci,*	Then your being will proceed toward the Most Holy Essence,
Sarta lawan nugraha.	*Dan disertai dengan anugerah-Nya.*	And accompanied by His grace.

Stanza 12, from the second line to the end of the verse, portrays the seventh negative trait while simultaneously closing the ethical opposition that has been outlined previously. Beginning with "Nora sabar katekan bilai" (impatience when faced with calamity), Yasadipura highlights the character of an individual who fails to confront life's trials with steadfastness of heart. This impatience is not merely an emotional reaction but reflects a deeper spiritual weakness that undermines the resilience of the soul. Within the Sufi framework, the virtue of patience (*ṣabr*) represents a foundational *maqām* (spiritual station) that every *sālik* (spiritual seeker) must traverse. The inability to reach this *maqām* signifies a fundamental failure to progress along the path of *sulūk* (spiritual journey).

However, this section does not remain as mere critique. Through the subsequent lines—"pan wus jangkep kang sapta prakara, iku pancabaya gedhe" (when the seven traits are complete, they become a great danger)—Yasadipura asserts that these negative traits, when accumulated within an individual, constitute the source of profound spiritual ruin. He refers to this as *pancabaya gedhe*, literally meaning "five great dangers" (despite the mention of seven traits), emphasizing that the accumulation of ethical corruption poses a real and serious threat to spiritual salvation.

The Sufi message is further reinforced in the following lines: *"rasakna putraningsun, marang kojah kang wuri-wuri"*, which can be interpreted as a direct call to the reader or spiritual disciple (*putraningsun*) to internalize and reflect upon this counsel. The phrase *"kojah kang wuri-wuri"* refers to the negligence of seemingly minor matters which, if left unchecked, may evolve into the root of spiritual ruin. This serves as a warning for readers to remain ever vigilant against the subtle yet perilous temptations of the inner self.

The closing lines—*"kalamun sira bisa, matrapken pitutur, kang wus kasebut ing ngarsa, iku badan umarek mring Mahasukci, sarta lawan nugraha"*—function as a spiritual resolution. If one succeeds in applying all the *pitutur* (moral advice) previously conveyed, they will return to the Most Holy Essence (*Dzat Mahasukci*) accompanied by divine grace (*nugraha*). In other words, overcoming the seven negative traits not only safeguards the individual from moral collapse but also opens the path toward the highest *maqām* in Sufism: *fanā'* and *baqā'*, the stages of annihilation of the self and subsistence in the Divine Presence.

Thus, the seventh negative trait—impatience in the face of calamity—represents the culmination of the ethical opposition, affirming that spiritual weakness not only harms the individual psychologically but also obstructs the realization of the divine potential within the human soul. Yasadipura conveys this insight with elegance through reflective verses that seamlessly weave together moral teachings, aesthetic expression, and spiritual doctrine into a unified poetic tapestry characteristic of Javanese-Islamic Sufism.

In *Serat Nitiprana*, the seven negative traits outlined by R. Ng. Yasadipura I are not merely positioned as moral flaws, but are symbolically depicted as the "temptations of the devil" (*budi ala ginoncang eblis*) that disturb the human conscience. The explicit reference to these traits as *budi ala ginoncang eblis* underscores that moral corruption is not simply an ethical deviation, but also a manifestation of the lower passions (*nafs al-ammārah*) that obstruct the process of spiritual purification.

Each of these vices—whether arrogance, hatred, meddlesomeness, quick temper, impatience, or insincerity—is portrayed as a form of spiritual infiltration that weakens the inner strength of an individual. Within the Sufi framework, the presence of such traits must be confronted through active spiritual awareness, including *muhasabah* (self-reflection), *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and ethical cultivation through the path of *suluk* (spiritual journey).

Thus, the moral message embedded in these verses emphasizes the crucial importance of inner vigilance in recognizing and combating the destructive tendencies within the human self. Through the literary medium of *suluk* poetry, Yasadipura guides readers not only to emulate virtue but also to remain alert to the insidious whispers of evil that arise from within. These

negative traits must be identified, controlled, and transformed as part of the spiritual process toward becoming the perfect human being (*insān kāmil*).

The analysis of the verses in *Serat Nitiprana* depicting the seven negative traits reveals distinct narrative patterns, both in linguistic style and in the structure of moral messaging. Three main tendencies emerge, demonstrating that Yasadipura does not merely present ethical teachings in normative terms but also crafts a rhetorical mechanism designed to correct and realign deviant behaviors.

First, the language used to depict the negative traits in *Serat Nitiprana* is marked by sharper, harsher, and more satirical diction. In contrast to the verses conveying positive traits—which employ gentle and reflective expressions—the verses describing negative traits often use active verbs and explicitly negative connotations, such as *anganiaya* (to harm), *wadulan* (to gossip or slander), and *kereng sarta lengus* (harsh and sour-faced). This stylistic choice reveals the poet's rhetorical strategy to awaken the reader's moral awareness and instill a sense of discomfort toward the criticized characters. Within the tradition of *tembang macapat*, this striking diction also serves as an ethical marker that reinforces the boundary between virtuous and blameworthy behavior.

Second, the negative traits are positioned as integral parts of the spiritual journey and the trials faced by every human being. The appearance of traits such as arrogance, anger, or impatience in the text is not merely categorized as sin or moral failure but is framed as psychological experiences that must be transcended. In the Sufi context, each negative trait represents a challenge for the spiritual traveler (*sālik*) to subdue the lower self (*nafs*) and to cultivate inner discipline through the path of *suluk*. Thus, the presence of negative traits in the narrative is not meant to be condemned in a fatalistic manner but rather recognized as part of the dynamic spiritual journey toward self-perfection.

Third, the symbolic link between negative traits and the "inner devil" (*iblis dalam diri*) is explicitly presented. Statements such as *budi ala ginoncang eblis* underscore that moral corruption does not merely stem from external forces but also from within—namely, from the inner self tempted by destructive whispers. By attributing the source of negative traits to these *iblisiyah* impulses, Yasadipura frames the moral conflict as an inner struggle

requiring self-control, *muhasabah* (self-examination), and profound spiritual awareness. This symbolism aligns with classical Sufi teachings that the greatest enemy of a human being is not an external power but the self itself—known as *jihad al-nafs* (the struggle against the ego).

Overall, the narrative of the seven negative traits in *Serat Nitiprana* does not stand in isolation but is positioned as a dialectical opposition to the seven virtues previously outlined. This narrative pattern reinforces the Sufi ethical structure of the text, guiding readers to recognize the potential for moral failure within themselves and to develop spiritual mechanisms for overcoming it. In this way, the work functions not only as a medium for moral instruction but also as an inner roadmap for identifying and managing the darker aspects of the self in the lifelong process of becoming the perfect human being.

The seven negative traits revealed in *Serat Nitiprana* are not merely a catalog of undesirable behaviors; rather, they form an essential component of the moral opposition structure within the framework of Islamic Sufi thought. Each negative trait presented functions not only as a reflection of ethical deviation but also as a narrative element that strengthens the dialectic between virtue and vice, between noble character and base desire. Thus, this text constructs a moral system that assumes the existence of a dynamic duality—one that must be recognized, controlled, and transcended by the spiritual subject.

In the context of Sufism, these negative traits represent the dominance of the lower self (*nafs al-ammārah*)—the human tendency to surrender to egotistical impulses, anger, arrogance, and worldly attachments. The existence of these negative traits constitutes the primary field of spiritual testing along the path of *sulūk*, in which the individual is required to undergo the process of self-purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) through spiritual exercises, introspection, and self-discipline. In other words, negative traits are not merely moral adversaries but also ontological obstacles that hinder the meeting between the human soul and the Divine Reality.

The symbolic portrayal of vice as a "temptation of the devil" further clarifies that the human struggle is not solely ethical but also metaphysical. In this context, the devil does not refer only to an external figure but also serves as a metaphor for the inner impulses that divert the human being from the

straight path (*ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*). Thus, recognizing these negative traits becomes the first essential step toward liberation from the grip of the *nafs* and entry into the higher stages (*maqāmāt*) of the Sufi path.

Furthermore, the presentation of these negative traits in the form of poetic *tembang* demonstrates a subtle yet effective pedagogical strategy. The *tembang* serves not only as a medium of instruction but also as a reflective instrument that allows readers or listeners to internalize the inner conflict conveyed through aesthetic expression. In this way, the literary structure of *Serat Nitiprana* fulfills an educational, therapeutic, and spiritual function simultaneously.

In sum, the interpretation of the seven negative traits in *Serat Nitiprana* affirms that this text presents a comprehensive Sufi ethical narrative. It not only illuminates the path of virtue but also guides readers to recognize and overcome the darker aspects within themselves. By subduing these traits, the individual is directed toward wholeness and spiritual purity, ultimately leading to a deeper recognition of the Divine. In this regard, *Serat Nitiprana* bequeaths not only a moral teaching but also a methodology of self-formation within the spiritual perspective of Javanese Islam.

Discussion

This study finds that *Serat Nitiprana* by R. Ng. Yasadipura I constructs a structured system of Sufi ethics through three central pillars. First, the text presents seven positive traits that reflect the constructive moral foundation of the Sufi tradition, such as patience (*ṣabr*), humility, compassion, courtesy, self-reflection, *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness), and contentment (*riḍā*) with divine destiny. These values are explicitly conveyed through the verses of *tembang macapat* as part of the process of soul purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and the formation of inner virtue. Second, the text articulates seven negative traits as the ethical antithesis, including arrogance, anger, meddlesomeness, impatience, and disregard for proper manners. These traits are portrayed as *iblisiyah* temptations that disturb the human conscience (*budi*), posing key spiritual challenges along the path (*sulūk*) toward union with God. Third, *Serat Nitiprana* constructs the concept of the self (*ke-diri-an*) within the Javanese-Islamic Sufi framework as a gradual process leading toward the realization of the *insān kāmil* (the perfected human). Through symbolic references such as *sangkan paraning dumadi* (the origin and return of

existence), *sedulur papat lima pancer* (the Javanese cosmological self), and *suluk* (the spiritual journey), the text offers a spiritual roadmap guiding individuals from existential awareness to reunification with the Divine Essence. These findings affirm that this literary work not only imparts moral advice but also offers a distinctive and contextually grounded methodology of spiritual transformation rooted in the Javanese-Islamic tradition.

The dualistic structure between the seven positive traits and the seven negative traits outlined by Yasadipura I in *Serat Nitiprana* reflects an ethical design rooted in Sufism that is not merely normative but instead serves as a directed and systematic map of spiritual *sulūk* (journey). This dualism is not a simplistic moral dichotomy; rather, it represents the inner dynamic between light (*fitrah ilāhiyyah*, the divine nature) and darkness (*nafs al-ammārah*, the lower self)—a struggle that lies at the heart of the Sufi path. Al-Qushayri's (2007) theory of *maqāmāt* explains that the journey of a *sālik* (spiritual traveler) toward God must traverse successive spiritual stations, such as repentance (*tawbah*), patience (*ṣabr*), vigilance (*murāqabah*), and contentment (*riḍā*). Each *maqām* demands the purification of the soul from negative traits and the cultivation of virtuous qualities as part of spiritual maturation.

Furthermore, the framework of *tazkiyat al-nafs*, as articulated by Al-Ghazali (2005), emphasizes that spiritual education must involve the identification, control, and transformation of destructive inner impulses. Thus, the narrative structure that presents negative traits is not intended for judgment but rather functions as a mirror and a tool for *muhāsabah* (self-reflection), activating an inner awareness essential to ethical transformation.

Within the sociocultural context of Yasadipura's time—an era marked by the transition from palace-centered *Kejawen* (Javanese syncretism) to colonial influence and Islamization—there emerged a disorientation of values and an identity crisis within Javanese Islam. This demanded a cultural response capable of integrating Islamic teachings into the local worldview in an organic and communicative manner. Through its subtle and symbolic dualistic approach, *Serat Nitiprana* serves as a relevant medium of Sufi education, offering both a practical path toward the realization of the *insān kāmil* (the perfected human) and a means of safeguarding ethical continuity within a society undergoing profound transformation.

In addition to drawing on classical Sufi frameworks such as *maqāmāt* and *tazkiyat al-nafs*, the dualistic construction of the ethical system in *Serat Nitiprana* can also be explained through the lens of Islamic Javanese *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) pedagogy, as outlined by Dhofier (1980) and Woodward (2011). According to Dhofier (1980), traditional *pesantren* are not merely religious educational institutions but also serve as spaces for character formation through the internalization of Sufi values practiced in daily life. These values are instilled through distinctive pedagogical methods: storytelling, symbolism, spiritual exercises (*laku*), and oral counsel from the *kiai* (Islamic teachers). This pedagogical structure closely aligns with the way *Serat Nitiprana* conveys its moral and spiritual teachings. Similar to the pedagogical patterns in *pesantren*, which emphasize the habituation of the soul through narrative and symbolism, Yasadipura I employs *tembang suluk* (mystical verse) as a medium for value internalization, where each stanza functions like the *kiai*'s advice—awakening moral awareness, fostering spiritual discipline, and refining ethical conduct.

The *tembang* in *Serat Nitiprana* also embodies a dialogical pattern commonly found in classical *akhlaq* (ethical) texts in the *pesantren* tradition, including the juxtaposition of virtues and vices, the identification of inner enemies (*nafsu*), and exhortations to maintain constant awareness of death and the afterlife. Thus, *Serat Nitiprana* not only presents Sufi values but also enacts the pedagogical methods of the *pesantren* in literary and symbolic form. It serves as a "kitab suluk" in literary guise, designed as an instrument of self-transformation, in the same way that the *pesantren* functions to shape *santri* (students) into individuals of refined character and deep spirituality.

Meanwhile, Woodward (2011) highlights that within the Javanese Islamic tradition, the transmission of Sufi teachings often occurs through aesthetic and symbolic strategies embedded within local cultural forms, such as *tembang macapat*, *wayang* (shadow puppetry), and mystical storytelling (*suluk*). This model allows spiritual values to enter the collective consciousness subtly and gently, without triggering resistance to religious teachings perceived as foreign to local tradition. Consequently, the dualism between virtues and vices in *Serat Nitiprana* operates not merely as a moral categorization but as a cognitive and affective structure that guides the *suluk* process in a communicative and culturally embedded way. Through the fusion of classical Sufism and Javanese wisdom, Yasadipura I constructs a

pedagogical, reflective, and transformative map of the self—a medium for character development and the reinforcement of Javanese Islamic identity amidst the value disorientation brought about by social change during the early colonial period.

The findings of this study reveal that *Serat Nitiprana* offers a distinctive approach to cultural Islamization, setting it apart from previous studies that have primarily examined the integration of Islam and Javanese culture through social practices such as *slametan* (communal feast rituals), folk arts, or community rites (Asrawijaya, 2022b; Rumbay et al., 2024; Wicaksono, 2019). While earlier expressions of Islamization tended to emphasize collective dimensions through ceremonial actions or visual performances, Yasadipura I's text adopts a symbolic approach through literary expression, particularly via *tembang suluk* (mystical Javanese verse). This strategy suggests that the transmission of Islamic values can also occur in reflective and literary forms, offering the power to shape ethical consciousness on a more personal and internalized level.

Within the context of Sufism and Sufi literature, *Serat Nitiprana* also displays patterns that distinguish it from Middle Eastern or Central Asian poetic traditions, such as those reflected in the works of Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi or Yunus Emre (Bardakçı, 2021; Karimi, 2024). Whereas these classical poems often employ Arabic-Persian meters and traditional religious language, Yasadipura integrates Sufi teachings into the local *tembang macapat* poetic form, utilizing Javanese-Islamic idioms such as *sangkan paraning dumadi* (the origin and ultimate return of existence), *sedulur papat lima pancer* (the four spiritual siblings and the center), and the narrative of *suluk* as a spiritual journey. This demonstrates that Sufism in the Javanese context is not merely adopted but creatively reinterpreted within communicative and deeply rooted cultural formats.

Furthermore, *Serat Nitiprana* does not merely articulate moral values; it constructs a structured Sufi ethical system through the opposition between seven virtues and seven vices. This framework offers a form of character development that is reflective and individualized, complementing the collective approaches frequently highlighted in earlier studies (Nasir, 2019; Rubaidi et al., 2023; S. Supriyanto, 2023). By presenting the text's value structure as a map of spiritual wayfaring (*suluk*), this research contributes

new insights to the study of Nusantara Sufism, particularly by systematically mapping a localized ethical framework that has thus far remained largely unexplored.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic mapping of the seven virtues and seven vices in *Serat Nitiprana* as the foundation of a comprehensive local Sufi ethical framework. Unlike previous research, which has typically focused on historical, philological, or general moral dimensions, this study interprets Yasadipura I's text as a *suluk* roadmap—a thematically and integrally arranged spiritual journey structured through moral opposition. The use of the *tembang macapat* poetic form serves not only as an aesthetic medium but also as a pedagogical device within the Javanese-Islamic tradition, internalizing Sufi values through the language of local culture. To the best of current literature, no prior studies have examined *Serat Nitiprana* through a comprehensive Sufi lens or treated it as a representation of a localized spiritual-ethical system. Thus, this research offers a new contribution to the field of Nusantara Sufism by proposing an alternative perspective: that classical literary texts can be read as instruments of character formation and spiritual awareness within the framework of Javanese-Islamic culture.

The interpretation of this study's findings reveals that *Serat Nitiprana* cannot be understood merely as an ethical text that conveys moral teachings in a normative sense. More than that, this work serves as a spiritual manual that guides readers in shaping the self (*ke-diri-an*) within the framework of Javanese-Islamic Sufism. Through its structured *tembang suluk* and distinctive symbolism—such as *sangkan paraning dumadi* (the metaphysical origin and return of existence), *budi ala ginoncang eblis* (the heart shaken by satanic temptation), and *sedulur papat lima pancer* (the mystical Javanese conception of the self)—the text constructs a complex yet coherent spiritual narrative that outlines the internal stages of the human journey toward becoming *insān kāmil* (the perfected human).

Serat Nitiprana simultaneously fulfills three essential functions. First, its educational function serves as a moral teaching medium embedded in *tembang macapat*—an oral-aesthetic form that facilitates the internalization of values within society. Second, its reflective function positions the text as a tool for self-interpretation, inviting readers to recognize both the noble and

darker potentials within themselves and to engage in *muhasabah* (self-examination) as a form of *jihad al-nafs* (the inner struggle against the ego). Third, its ideological function emerges as a cultural response to the disintegration of values caused by colonialism and the encroachment of modernity that began to permeate Javanese society during Yasadipura I's time. In this context, *Serat Nitiprana* operates as a symbolic defense mechanism, not only safeguarding the community's spiritual integrity but also offering an alternative path for constructing a holistic, contextual, and locally rooted Javanese-Islamic identity grounded in spiritual tradition.

Reflections on the findings of this study indicate that *Serat Nitiprana* holds several strategic functions within the context of contemporary Javanese society. First, this work serves to reinforce Sufi ethical values amidst the growing tide of pragmatism and moral disorientation. Teachings on patience (*ṣabr*), humility (*tawāḍuʿ*), and acceptance (*riḍāʾ*) presented in poetic *tembang* form not only revive spiritual values but also remain relevant for shaping ethical consciousness in modern society. Second, the text offers an alternative model of moral development rooted in local tradition, particularly through an educational approach based on *tembang suluk*, which is capable of reaching the emotional and reflective dimensions of its audience—something rarely achieved in formal moral education models that tend to be purely instructive and cognitive.

Nevertheless, there are potential dysfunctions that warrant careful attention. One such potential limitation of *Serat Nitiprana* as a Sufi ethical text in today's context lies in the challenges of language and accessibility for younger generations. Several studies have shown that classical Javanese literature is often perceived as difficult to comprehend by novice readers due to its archaic language and complex narrative structures (Rosa et al., 2023). This complexity is further exacerbated by the preferences of today's urban youth, who are more drawn to popular media such as films, digital music, and fast-paced internet-based communication, causing them to distance themselves from traditional literary forms (Gjelstad, 2015). The influence of modernization and globalization has also transformed how Javanese literature is produced and consumed, even as cultural values persist within literary conventions (Khairina & Lestari, 2020). This condition creates the risk that the Sufi teachings of *Serat Nitiprana* may no longer be read, transmitted, or internalized effectively unless they are adapted through

innovative educational approaches. Initiatives such as the integration of multimodal literacy (Insani & Triyono, 2024) and the use of culturally grounded learning media, including traditional games (Supeni & Hakim, 2019), demonstrate potential pathways to bridge this gap and introduce classical ethical values in formats that are accessible, relevant, and communicative for contemporary audiences.

The second potential dysfunction in utilizing *Serat Nitiprana* as a Sufi ethical text lies in the risk of textual interpretation carried out without adequate spiritual guidance. In the Sufi tradition, the reading of mystical texts such as *Serat Nitiprana* is part of the *suluk*—a spiritual journey that ideally requires the guidance of a *mursyid* or spiritual mentor. Wirianto et al. (2023) emphasize that in the context of *tarekat* (Sufi orders), the authority of a spiritual teacher is essential, as it ensures that disciples are guided intensively toward becoming *insān kāmil* (the perfected human) without transgressing the boundaries of *sharīʿah*. When Sufi texts are read individually and literally, without the framework of *adab* (ethical conduct) or *talqin* (spiritual instruction), there is a significant risk that their symbolic meanings and inner dimensions will be misunderstood or reduced to mere moralistic advice. Shayakhmetova (2022) argues that the interpretation of poetry and music in Sufism cannot be separated from collective spiritual experiences, such as the practices of *samāʿ* and *dhikr*, which enable deep embodiment of the ethical and divine values embedded in the text. Without these lived experiences, the reading of texts like *Serat Nitiprana* may lose the affective and spiritual context that forms the heart of their Sufi message. Therefore, it is necessary to revitalize contextual Sufi hermeneutics—either through community-based spiritual education or by integrating guided spiritual mentorship into the teaching of classical Islamic-Javanese texts.

The implications of this study affirm that *Serat Nitiprana* is not merely a literary heritage text, but a source of Sufi values that remains highly relevant for strengthening the moral and spiritual foundations of contemporary Javanese Muslim society. In the educational context, this work deserves to be integrated into Islamic curricula grounded in local culture, whether in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), *madrasah*, or general schools that promote character education. The values embedded in the *tembang suluk*—such as patience (*ṣabr*), humility (*tawāḍuʿ*), and awareness of life's impermanence—offer an alternative model for moral formation that is both

contextual and reflective. Moreover, the challenge of accessibility to this classical text demands the development of innovative and communicative learning media, such as interpretive animations, audiovisual renditions of *tembang*, or digital modules based on poetic verses. In the long term, further research is needed to explore the pedagogical function of *tembang macapat* in transmitting Sufi teachings, particularly within *pesantren* settings or indigenous educational institutions. Through these efforts, *Serat Nitiprana* holds the potential to be revitalized as both an educational and spiritual instrument—serving not only to preserve cultural memory but also to shape the *insān kāmil* (the perfected human) in the present day.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *Serat Nitiprana*, authored by Kiai Raden Ngabehi Yasadipura I, is not merely a classical Javanese literary work but constitutes a structured, reflective, and transformative system of Sufi ethics within the cultural context of Islam-Jawa (Javanese Islam). The text presents three central pillars that form the key findings of this research. First, the text formulates seven positive traits (*tujuh sifat baik*) as the constructive moral foundation leading toward the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*)—a central concept in Sufism that refers to the spiritual cleansing and refinement of the self. These traits include patience (*ṣabr*), humility (*tawāḍuʿ*), compassion (*rahmah*), courteousness (*adab*), self-reflection, consistent recitation of forgiveness (*istikfar*), and acceptance (*riḍāʾ*) of divine destiny. Second, the text presents seven negative traits (*tujuh sifat buruk*) as ethical opposites and spiritual obstacles that embody the struggle against the lower self or base desires (*nafs al-ammārah*). These traits—such as arrogance, anger, meddlesomeness, impatience, and rejection of social decorum—are framed as manifestations of the "whisperings of the devil" (*budi ala ginoncang eblis*), symbolizing inner temptations that threaten the integrity of the soul. This ethical opposition reflects the central Sufi concept of *jihad al-nafs*, the internal spiritual struggle to overcome one's ego and impulses. Third, the text constructs the concept of the self (*ke-diri-an*) as a progressive spiritual journey toward *insān kāmil*—the perfected human being—conveyed through the use of local Javanese cultural symbols such as *sangkan paraning dumadi* (the metaphysical origin and ultimate return of all beings), *sedulur papat lima pancer* (a traditional Javanese cosmological concept involving four spiritual siblings and a central self), and the poetic form of

tembang suluk (traditional Javanese mystical songs). Through these elements, *Serat Nitiprana* offers a spiritual roadmap that not only resonated within its historical setting but remains relevant as a source of ethical guidance in contemporary society grappling with moral and spiritual disorientation.

The principal contribution of this study lies in its systematic mapping of the seven virtues and seven vices within *Serat Nitiprana* as a coherent ethical framework rooted in local Sufism. This research demonstrates that Javanese classical literature can be read not only as cultural heritage but also as pedagogical and spiritual texts that convey methods of self-transformation through accessible, culturally embedded forms. By framing *tembang suluk*—a genre of spiritual poetry sung in macapat meter—as an educational medium, this study enriches the discourse on cultural Islamization (*Islamisasi kultural*) and ethical pedagogy within Javanese Islam. Furthermore, the methodological approach opens new possibilities for interpreting traditional literary texts as meaningful sources for character education and the cultivation of spiritual consciousness within a local cultural framework.

Nevertheless, this study acknowledges certain limitations. Its primary focus on thematic and symbolic analysis leaves unexplored the historical redaction of the text, the manuscript's production context, and potential textual variants of *Serat Nitiprana* from other versions. Additionally, the study does not address how the text is currently received or practiced within *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) or other reading communities. Future research may thus benefit from ethnographic studies of *tembang suluk* recitation traditions, explorations of how the text's teachings influence spiritual practices today, or comparative analysis with other local Sufi texts to deepen the understanding of Indonesia's ethical systems as rooted, holistic, and culturally meaningful expressions of Islam.

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Essay

Agama dan Dialektika Toleransi-Intoleransi: Analisis Kritis atas Dinamika Keagamaan dalam Masyarakat Plural Indonesia

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Indonesia adalah salah satu negara dengan keragaman agama terbesar di dunia, di mana lebih dari enam agama resmi diakui dan dianut oleh masyarakat yang tersebar di berbagai pulau dan daerah. Agama bukan hanya menjadi bagian dari identitas spiritual, tetapi juga terjalin erat dengan identitas nasional, kehidupan sosial, serta dinamika politik negara ini (Munandar, 2019; Thaha, Ropi, & Umam, 2024). Sebagai negara dengan populasi Muslim terbesar di dunia namun tetap mempertahankan pluralitas agama, Indonesia membangun fondasi kenegaraannya melalui Pancasila yang menegaskan pentingnya menghormati keberagaman keyakinan (Intan, 2019; Munandar, 2019).

Peran agama dalam masyarakat Indonesia sangatlah multifaset. Di satu sisi, agama memberikan kontribusi positif dalam memperkuat persatuan bangsa, memfasilitasi pembangunan sosial, dan memperkuat identitas nasional melalui nilai-nilai luhur yang diajarkan oleh berbagai tradisi keagamaan (Colbran, 2010). Agama juga memainkan peran penting dalam manajemen lingkungan dan komunikasi pembangunan partisipatif yang berkelanjutan (Akhda, Trisakti Haryadi, & Andarwati, 2019). Di sisi lain, agama kerap menjadi sumber ketegangan sosial, diskriminasi, hingga kekerasan atas nama keyakinan, terutama ketika digunakan sebagai

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instrumen politik atau ketika berkembangnya tafsir keagamaan yang eksklusif (Colbran, 2010; Hamayotsu, 2014).

Fakta bahwa berbagai wilayah di Indonesia mampu membangun model toleransi sosial yang kokoh (seperti di Bali dan Lombok Utara) menunjukkan bahwa pluralitas dapat dikelola dengan baik jika didukung oleh kesadaran bersama, pemahaman lintas iman, dan komitmen pada nilai-nilai kebangsaan (Japar, Fadhillah, & Syarifa, 2019). Sementara itu, munculnya konflik-konflik keagamaan di berbagai daerah juga menjadi pengingat bahwa tanpa upaya aktif membangun dialog, potensi disintegrasi sosial tetap mengancam (Hamayotsu, 2014; Suryomenggolo, 2018).

Essay ini berargumen bahwa dalam realitas sosial kontemporer Indonesia, agama memiliki dua wajah yang paradoksal: di satu sisi berperan sebagai sumber nilai-nilai toleransi, perdamaian, dan keharmonisan sosial, namun di sisi lain dapat dijadikan justifikasi bagi tindakan intoleransi, diskriminasi, bahkan kekerasan atas nama keyakinan. Dualitas ini bukanlah sifat bawaan dari ajaran agama itu sendiri, melainkan merupakan hasil dari proses interpretasi yang beragam terhadap teks-teks keagamaan, serta sangat dipengaruhi oleh dinamika sosial, politik, ekonomi, dan budaya yang membentuk praktik keagamaan di masyarakat. Dengan demikian, wajah agama yang muncul dalam ruang sosial lebih ditentukan oleh bagaimana manusia memaknai dan mengimplementasikan ajaran-ajaran agama dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, bukan oleh teks-teks suci semata.

Untuk mendukung argumen tersebut, essay ini akan dibagi ke dalam tiga bagian utama. Pertama, essay ini akan membahas bagaimana agama berperan sebagai sumber toleransi melalui penekanan pada nilai-nilai universal kemanusiaan, praktik dialog antaragama, dan kontribusi agama dalam memperkuat kohesi sosial di Indonesia. Kedua, essay ini akan mengkaji bagaimana agama, dalam konteks tertentu, dapat dijadikan justifikasi bagi tindakan intoleransi, baik melalui interpretasi eksklusif terhadap ajaran maupun melalui politisasi agama dalam berbagai konflik sosial.

Ketiga, essay ini akan menganalisis berbagai faktor internal dan eksternal yang mempengaruhi munculnya sikap toleransi atau intoleransi beragama, dengan menggunakan studi kasus dari komunitas lokal seperti

Kampung Sawah, Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB), serta dinamika internal dalam organisasi keagamaan seperti Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama. Dengan pendekatan tersebut, essay ini diharapkan dapat memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif mengenai dialektika toleransi dan intoleransi agama dalam masyarakat plural Indonesia.

Agama sebagai Sumber Toleransi

Pada hakikatnya, setiap agama di dunia mengajarkan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan, kasih sayang, dan kedamaian sebagai fondasi moral dan etika yang membimbing perilaku umatnya. Nilai-nilai ini tidak hanya menjadi inti ajaran spiritual, tetapi juga membentuk dasar bagi sikap toleransi dan koeksistensi dalam masyarakat yang majemuk. Dalam tradisi Buddhisme, misalnya, kasih sayang (*compassion*) menjadi prinsip mendasar yang mendorong empati dan dorongan untuk mengurangi penderitaan sesama (Gabriel, 2008). Demikian pula, dalam ajaran Kristen, kasih sayang dan cinta tanpa syarat (*agape*) menjadi pijakan utama dalam hubungan antarmanusia, sebagaimana diajarkan oleh Yesus Kristus dan diwariskan dalam etos perawatan penuh belas kasih (Gillath, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005; Straughair, 2012).

Islam juga menempatkan belas kasih (*rahmah*) dan perdamaian sebagai nilai-nilai utama yang melekat pada sifat Tuhan, sebagaimana tercermin dalam ajaran Al-Qur'an dan praktik Nabi Muhammad SAW yang mendorong hidup berdampingan secara damai dan penuh toleransi (Machasin, 2024; Navvab, 2018). Dalam Hindu dan Jainisme, prinsip *ahimsa* atau non-kekerasan menjadi landasan yang menegaskan pentingnya penghormatan terhadap kehidupan dan perlunya menjaga perdamaian dalam setiap tindakan (Gabriel, 2008). Melalui berbagai ajaran ini, tampak bahwa meskipun agama memiliki keragaman teologis dan ritual, semuanya berbagi nilai-nilai universal seperti keadilan, kasih, dan perdamaian yang mendorong terbentuknya masyarakat yang menghargai perbedaan dan menjunjung tinggi toleransi (Gentry, 2016; Johnson & Tamney, 2019).

Dalam Islam, prinsip *Rahmatan lil 'alamin* yang termaktub dalam Al-Qur'an Surat Al-Anbiya ayat 107, "Dan tidaklah Kami mengutus engkau (Muhammad) melainkan sebagai rahmat bagi seluruh alam semesta," merupakan landasan teologis yang menegaskan bahwa kehadiran Islam di

dunia bertujuan membawa kedamaian, kasih sayang, dan kebaikan bagi seluruh makhluk, bukan hanya untuk umat Islam semata. Konsep ini mencerminkan dimensi universal dari ajaran Islam yang menolak segala bentuk kekerasan, diskriminasi, dan kebencian atas dasar perbedaan keyakinan.

Nilai-nilai toleransi dalam Islam tidak hanya berakar pada teks suci, tetapi juga terwujud dalam praktik historis Nabi Muhammad SAW yang membangun masyarakat Madinah berdasarkan Piagam Madinah, sebuah perjanjian sosial yang menjamin hak hidup dan kebebasan beragama bagi komunitas Yahudi, Nasrani, dan kelompok lain yang berbeda keyakinan. Dalam konteks ini, Islam dipahami sebagai agama yang menghargai pluralitas dan menjunjung tinggi hak asasi manusia. Sebagaimana dijelaskan oleh Machasin (2024), Islam mengajarkan penerimaan terhadap perbedaan sebagai bagian dari kehendak Tuhan, serta menyerukan pentingnya hidup berdampingan secara damai tanpa memaksakan keyakinan kepada orang lain.

Selain itu, prinsip *rahmah* atau kasih sayang menjadi pusat ajaran Islam yang menuntut umatnya untuk memperlakukan sesama dengan kelembutan, empati, dan penghormatan, termasuk terhadap mereka yang berbeda agama. Penafsiran Islam yang menekankan dimensi rahmat ini sangat relevan dalam mendorong budaya toleransi dan perdamaian di tengah masyarakat multikultural seperti Indonesia. Sayangnya, seperti yang disoroti oleh Yazdani (2020), potensi luhur ajaran ini sering terdistorsi ketika muncul pemahaman yang sempit dan eksklusif, sehingga menimbulkan ketegangan sosial yang bertentangan dengan pesan perdamaian yang dibawa oleh Islam.

Dalam tradisi Kristen, salah satu nilai inti yang menjadi landasan moral dan etika umatnya adalah konsep *agape*, yaitu cinta kasih tanpa syarat yang melampaui batasan ras, agama, dan status sosial. *Agape* dipahami sebagai kasih ilahi yang tidak menuntut balasan, sebuah bentuk cinta yang tulus yang mengarahkan manusia untuk mengasihi sesama tanpa diskriminasi, sebagaimana diajarkan oleh Yesus Kristus dalam berbagai ajaran dan perumpamaan di dalam Injil. Ajaran ini tercermin dalam sabda Yesus: "Kasihilah sesamamu manusia seperti dirimu sendiri" (Markus 12:31), yang menempatkan kasih sebagai prinsip tertinggi dalam kehidupan beragama dan sosial.

Cinta kasih dalam ajaran Kristen bukan hanya bersifat individual, tetapi juga berdimensi sosial. Ia mendorong terciptanya relasi yang harmonis antarmanusia dengan mengedepankan sikap empati, pengampunan, dan keadilan. Seperti yang diuraikan oleh Straughair (2012) dalam konteks etika keperawatan, prinsip kasih yang mendalam ini mendorong manusia untuk merawat, membantu, dan menunjukkan solidaritas kepada siapa saja, tanpa memandang perbedaan keyakinan. Demikian pula, Gillath, Shaver, dan Mikulincer (2005) menekankan bahwa kasih dalam tradisi Kristen memiliki keterkaitan erat dengan sikap altruistik dan welas asih yang menjadi dasar bagi tindakan sosial yang penuh kepedulian.

Penerapan nilai *agape* dalam kehidupan sosial nyata tampak secara kuat dalam berbagai inisiatif perdamaian dan rekonsiliasi yang dipelopori oleh tokoh-tokoh Kristen, salah satunya adalah Desmond Tutu di Afrika Selatan. Sebagai Ketua *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) yang dibentuk pada tahun 1995, Desmond Tutu memegang peran sentral dalam membantu Afrika Selatan bertransisi dari era apartheid menuju masyarakat yang lebih adil dan damai. Pendekatan TRC yang menempatkan pengampunan, pengakuan dosa, dan rekonsiliasi di atas pembalasan dan kebencian mencerminkan nilai kasih Kristen yang menekankan pemulihan hubungan kemanusiaan (Márquez Beunza, 2014; Meiring, 2022). Melalui ribuan sidang publik yang disiarkan secara luas, TRC mendorong pelaku kekerasan untuk mengakui kesalahan mereka dan memberikan ruang bagi para korban untuk bersuara, dengan tujuan membangun kepercayaan dan rekonsiliasi nasional (Mussi, 2019; Still, 2018).

Desmond Tutu mengedepankan prinsip *ubuntu*, yakni keyakinan bahwa kemanusiaan seseorang terikat pada kemanusiaan orang lain, sehingga rekonsiliasi hanya dapat dicapai melalui keterbukaan, pengakuan kebenaran, dan kasih tanpa syarat (Krog, 2008). Konsep ini sejalan dengan ajaran *agape* yang menempatkan kasih dan pengampunan di atas dendam dan kekerasan. Meski demikian, TRC tidak luput dari kritik, di mana sebagian kalangan menilai bahwa tekanan untuk memaafkan bisa mengabaikan keadilan retributif yang esensial bagi beberapa korban (Mussi, 2018; Rotberg & Thompson, 2010). Meskipun menghadapi tantangan, pendekatan ini tetap menjadi model inspiratif bagi banyak gerakan lintas agama di seluruh dunia, termasuk di Indonesia, yang mengedepankan dialog, pengakuan kebenaran,

dan penghargaan terhadap martabat manusia sebagai jalan menuju perdamaian berkelanjutan.

Dalam ajaran Hindu dan Buddha, prinsip *ahimsa* atau non-kekerasan merupakan inti dari etika dan spiritualitas yang mendasari seluruh tindakan umatnya. *Ahimsa*, yang secara harfiah berarti "tidak menyakiti," mengajarkan penghormatan mendalam terhadap kehidupan dalam segala bentuknya dan menjadi fondasi moral untuk mencegah segala bentuk kekerasan, baik dalam ucapan, tindakan, maupun pikiran (Balcerowicz, 2022). Dalam tradisi Hindu, nilai ini diangkat sebagai bagian dari *dharma* atau kewajiban moral yang mendorong umat untuk hidup selaras dengan alam dan sesama makhluk hidup, serta dilihat sebagai jalan untuk mencapai *moksa* atau pembebasan spiritual (Framarin, 2011; Reznik, Dekhnich, Kutomanov, Maidansky, & Filatova, 2019). Tokoh seperti Mahatma Gandhi menempatkan *ahimsa* sebagai strategi utama perjuangan sosial-politik melalui gerakan *satyagraha*, yakni perlawanan tanpa kekerasan yang menolak balas dendam dan menekankan kasih universal (Lakra, 2024).

Sementara dalam Buddhisme, *ahimsa* tercermin dalam sila pertama yang mewajibkan umat untuk menghindari pembunuhan dan menyakiti makhluk hidup, yang diperluas dalam praktik seperti vegetarianisme dan perlindungan terhadap semua makhluk (Yew, 2023). Buddhisme menempatkan non-kekerasan tidak hanya sebagai aturan moral, tetapi sebagai cara untuk mengurangi penderitaan (*dukkha*) dan membangun kebajikan batin. Di sisi lain, dalam Jainisme, *ahimsa* bahkan diangkat sebagai prinsip tertinggi yang terintegrasi dengan konsep *aparigraha* (tidak serakah) dan *anekānta* (non-absolutisme), yang bersama-sama membentuk panduan spiritual yang menuntut penghormatan penuh terhadap kehidupan (Katarnikar, 2018).

Dalam konteks modern, penerapan *ahimsa* tidak hanya terbatas pada praktik keagamaan, melainkan juga diperluas dalam bidang sosial-politik, lingkungan, dan bahkan dunia bisnis. Konsep ini telah menjadi landasan bagi gerakan perlindungan lingkungan dan kesejahteraan hewan, di mana prinsip *ahimsa* mendorong gaya hidup vegetarian, pengurangan eksploitasi alam, dan penghormatan terhadap keberlanjutan ekologis (McLaughlin, 2012; Paul, 2019; Zhou, Zhao, & Zhang, 2014). Bahkan dalam konteks organisasi dan dunia kerja, *ahimsa* mulai diterapkan sebagai pendekatan untuk

menciptakan budaya non-kekerasan, pemberdayaan diri, dan resolusi konflik secara damai (Sarkar, 2022).

Analisis terhadap nilai-nilai inti dalam ajaran agama menunjukkan bahwa agama memiliki potensi besar dalam membangun toleransi ketika ajarannya dipahami dan dipraktikkan secara inklusif dan kontekstual. Nilai-nilai seperti *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, *agape*, dan *ahimsa* dapat menjadi sumber inspirasi moral yang menumbuhkan penghargaan terhadap keberagaman, memperkuat solidaritas sosial, dan mendorong penyelesaian konflik melalui jalan damai. Dalam perspektif teori modal sosial yang dikemukakan oleh Robert Putnam (2000), agama dapat memperkuat jaringan sosial dan memperluas kepercayaan lintas kelompok melalui norma-norma bersama dan aktivitas komunitas yang melibatkan berbagai latar belakang keagamaan. Modal sosial yang berbasis pada nilai-nilai keagamaan ini dapat menciptakan apa yang disebut Putnam sebagai *bridging social capital*, yaitu jembatan antar kelompok yang berbeda, bukan hanya ikatan dalam kelompok yang homogen (*bonding social capital*).

Dengan demikian, ketika agama dijadikan basis untuk membangun dialog, kerjasama, dan aksi sosial bersama, ia dapat berfungsi sebagai kekuatan positif yang mendorong terciptanya masyarakat yang damai, inklusif, dan toleran. Namun, potensi ini hanya dapat terwujud apabila ajaran agama tidak dikerdilkan dalam tafsir literal sempit yang menolak pluralitas, melainkan dikembangkan dalam kerangka etika kemanusiaan yang menempatkan penghargaan terhadap martabat setiap individu sebagai prinsip utama. Di sinilah letak peran krusial para pemuka agama, tokoh masyarakat, dan institusi keagamaan dalam membentuk pemahaman agama yang mendorong kohesi sosial dan mencegah munculnya intoleransi. Oleh karena itu, agama bukan hanya dapat, tetapi harus, diaktualisasikan sebagai kekuatan sosial yang mencerahkan dan menumbuhkan toleransi dalam kehidupan bermasyarakat.

Agama sebagai Justifikasi Intoleransi

Di sisi lain, sejarah dunia juga mencatat berbagai peristiwa kelam yang dilakukan atas nama agama. Kekerasan seperti Perang Salib, pembantaian sektarian, hingga tindakan terorisme modern menunjukkan bahwa agama kerap kali dijadikan alat untuk melanggengkan kekuasaan dan menyebarkan

kebencian terhadap kelompok yang dianggap "lain." Ketika ajaran agama dimaknai secara eksklusif dan absolut, ruang dialog menjadi tertutup, sementara perbedaan dipandang sebagai ancaman, bukan kekayaan (Juergensmeyer, 2017). Intoleransi keagamaan sering berakar pada penafsiran literal terhadap teks-teks suci yang mengabaikan konteks historis, sosial, dan kultural. Tafsir sempit ini melahirkan klaim kebenaran tunggal (*truth claim*) yang meniadakan ruang bagi keberagaman pandangan, sebuah pola yang kerap dijumpai dalam fundamentalisme agama yang memandang dunia secara biner: hitam-putih, benar-salah, halal-haram (Armstrong, 2011).

Fenomena ini semakin kompleks ketika muncul kelompok-kelompok radikal seperti ISIS dan Boko Haram yang memanfaatkan narasi agama untuk merekrut, memobilisasi, bahkan melakukan kekerasan atas nama jihad. Dalam kenyataannya, mereka tidak memperjuangkan nilai-nilai ilahiah, melainkan memelintir ajaran agama demi tujuan politik dan kekuasaan (Roy, 2004). Bahkan institusi keagamaan pun tidak lepas dari andil dalam mempertahankan intoleransi apabila mereka menutup ruang kritik, memonopoli tafsir, dan memarginalkan kelompok-kelompok minoritas internal, seperti Syiah, Ahmadiyah, atau komunitas Kristen non-mainstream. Lebih jauh lagi, dalam banyak kasus, negara justru terlibat dalam pembiaran atau bahkan melegitimasi praktik intoleransi tersebut (An-Naim, 2008). Semua ini menunjukkan bahwa intoleransi atas nama agama bukanlah cerminan ajaran agama itu sendiri, melainkan hasil dari interpretasi eksklusif dan manipulasi kepentingan yang mereduksi esensi nilai-nilai universal agama.

Kasus penolakan pendirian rumah ibadah Gereja Kristen Indonesia (GKI) Yasmin di Bogor merupakan salah satu contoh paling nyata dari intoleransi beragama yang terjadi di Indonesia. Meskipun gereja tersebut telah memperoleh Izin Mendirikan Bangunan (IMB) yang sah sejak tahun 2006, sekelompok warga menolak keberadaan gereja dengan dalih bahwa pendiriannya dapat mengganggu ketertiban sosial dan harmoni lingkungan. Penolakan ini didukung oleh keputusan pemerintah daerah yang tidak berpihak pada jaminan kebebasan beragama sebagaimana diatur dalam konstitusi Indonesia.

Upaya mediasi sempat dilakukan oleh pemerintah daerah untuk mencari jalan keluar, termasuk melalui kesepakatan untuk merelokasi gereja. Namun, sebagaimana dicatat oleh Ali-Fauzi dan Darningtyas (2023), mediasi ini tidak mampu menyelesaikan akar masalah secara tuntas dan justru meninggalkan permasalahan hukum yang berpotensi memicu konflik baru di masa depan. Mediasi antaragama yang difasilitasi oleh Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) dan didukung oleh Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia juga tidak selalu berhasil memberikan penyelesaian yang adil dan berkelanjutan, akibat lemahnya komitmen struktural dan ketimpangan kekuasaan di tingkat lokal.

Kasus GKI Yasmin menggambarkan bahwa intoleransi keagamaan tidak hanya bersumber dari tafsir agama yang eksklusif, tetapi juga dipertahankan oleh kepentingan politik lokal dan lemahnya perlindungan hak asasi manusia. Situasi ini memperlihatkan kegagalan institusi mediasi untuk menegakkan prinsip keadilan substantif, di mana kelompok minoritas tetap menjadi korban marginalisasi dalam sistem sosial dan politik yang lebih besar. Dengan demikian, kasus ini menjadi bukti bahwa agama dapat dijadikan justifikasi untuk diskriminasi ketika tidak disertai dengan komitmen kuat terhadap supremasi hukum dan penghargaan terhadap pluralisme (Ali-Fauzi & Darningtyas, 2023).

Kasus penolakan pendirian rumah ibadah Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) Filadelfia di Bekasi merupakan salah satu cerminan nyata intoleransi beragama dan pelanggaran hak asasi manusia di Indonesia. Meskipun Indonesia secara konstitusional menjamin kebebasan beragama, dalam praktiknya, umat Kristen seperti jemaat HKBP Filadelfia kerap menghadapi penolakan atas hak beribadah mereka, baik dari sebagian masyarakat maupun dari pemerintah daerah. Sejak tahun 2007, jemaat HKBP dilarang membangun gereja dan bahkan tidak diperbolehkan mengadakan ibadah di lokasi tersebut, meskipun semua persyaratan hukum telah dipenuhi (Tampubolon, 2021). Larangan ini mencerminkan kegagalan pemerintah dalam menegakkan prinsip-prinsip hak asasi dan keadilan sosial.

Penolakan terhadap HKBP Filadelfia tidak terlepas dari adanya bias legal dan institusional yang dilembagakan melalui peraturan daerah dan penerapan Undang-Undang Penodaan Agama. Alih-alih melindungi minoritas, beberapa regulasi justru memperkuat diskriminasi dengan

memperketat syarat-syarat pendirian rumah ibadah, yang seringkali dimanfaatkan oleh kelompok mayoritas untuk menolak keberadaan komunitas agama lain (Fenton, 2016). Situasi ini diperparah oleh faktor-faktor sosiologis, di mana kawasan urban seperti Bekasi yang memiliki keberagaman penduduk cenderung lebih rentan terhadap konflik dan gesekan antaragama (Jamaludin, 2021). Penolakan yang terjadi bukan hanya berakar pada perbedaan keyakinan, tetapi juga dipicu oleh dinamika sosial, ketimpangan identitas, serta peran aktor politik yang memanfaatkan isu agama demi kepentingan elektoral (Situmeang, 2024).

Kasus HKBP Filadelfia merupakan contoh pelanggaran nyata terhadap hak beragama, di mana umat Kristen dipaksa untuk beribadah di pinggir jalan dalam suasana intimidatif dan tidak aman. Sebagaimana dicatat oleh Tampubolon (2021), tindakan ini jelas melanggar prinsip-prinsip kebebasan beragama yang diakui dalam konstitusi maupun dalam hukum internasional. Sayangnya, berbagai upaya mediasi yang dilakukan, baik oleh pemerintah maupun oleh forum lintas agama, kerap tidak memberikan hasil yang memuaskan karena lemahnya komitmen politik dan dominasi persepsi mayoritas yang intoleran.

Dengan demikian, kasus HKBP Filadelfia memperlihatkan bagaimana intoleransi keagamaan di Indonesia bukan hanya lahir dari tafsir agama yang eksklusif, tetapi juga diperkuat oleh kerangka hukum yang bias, dinamika sosial-politik yang diskriminatif, serta lemahnya penegakan hak asasi manusia. Situasi ini menegaskan perlunya reformasi kebijakan, pendidikan toleransi, dan penguatan komitmen terhadap pluralisme untuk mencegah berulangnya kasus serupa di masa depan.

Kasus Ahmadiyah di Indonesia menjadi salah satu representasi nyata dari intoleransi berbasis agama yang berlarut-larut dan sistemik. Komunitas Ahmadiyah, yang dianggap menyimpang dari arus utama Islam Sunni, telah mengalami persekusi sejak era reformasi, mulai dari pelarangan aktivitas keagamaan hingga kekerasan fisik yang mengancam jiwa (Noor, Syamsiyatun, & Banawiratma, 2013). Puncak ketegangan terjadi setelah Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) mengeluarkan fatwa sesat terhadap Ahmadiyah pada 2005, yang kemudian diperkuat oleh Surat Keputusan Bersama (SKB) tiga menteri pada 2008. Peraturan ini tidak hanya membatasi kebebasan beribadah Ahmadiyah, tetapi juga membuka ruang legitimasi

sosial bagi kelompok-kelompok radikal untuk melakukan serangan terhadap mereka, seperti yang dilakukan oleh Front Pembela Islam (FPI) (Fuller, 2011; Putra, Holtz, & Rufaedah, 2018).

Intoleransi terhadap Ahmadiyah semakin diperparah oleh ambivalensi negara yang kerap gagal memberikan perlindungan hukum yang tegas. Meskipun konstitusi Indonesia menjamin kebebasan beragama, dalam praktiknya aparat negara sering bersikap pasif bahkan turut mendukung eksklusi sosial terhadap Ahmadiyah (Suryana, 2018). Persekusi ini tidak semata-mata didorong oleh alasan teologis, tetapi juga oleh konstruksi identitas nasional yang mengusung "godly nationalism"—sebuah nasionalisme berbasis keseragaman keyakinan yang menyingkirkan kelompok heterodoks seperti Ahmadiyah (Menchik, 2014). Akibatnya, Ahmadiyah diposisikan sebagai "yang lain" yang tidak sesuai dengan model nasionalisme religius dominan di Indonesia.

Meski mengalami tekanan terus-menerus, komunitas Ahmadiyah di berbagai daerah, seperti di Malang, tetap menunjukkan ketahanan sosial melalui berbagai strategi seperti memperkuat dialog lintas agama, memperjuangkan pengakuan hak sipil, serta berkontribusi dalam kegiatan sosial kemasyarakatan (Widiyanto, Setiawan, Rohmat, & Maesur, 2024; Wulandari & Bawono, 2023). Upaya ini mencerminkan resistensi damai dalam menghadapi diskriminasi struktural dan menunjukkan bahwa toleransi harus diwujudkan tidak hanya melalui perlindungan hukum tetapi juga melalui perubahan sosial dan kultural yang lebih mendalam.

Untuk memahami fenomena intoleransi berbasis agama, penting untuk menelaah tiga konsep kunci yang saling terkait: interpretasi literal teks suci, fundamentalisme agama, dan politisasi agama. Pertama, salah satu penyebab utama munculnya intoleransi beragama adalah kecenderungan untuk menafsirkan teks-teks suci secara literal tanpa memperhatikan konteks sosial, historis, dan budaya yang melingkupi kelahirannya. Tafsir literal ini biasanya menolak pendekatan historis-kritis dan memandang teks agama sebagai wahyu yang mutlak dan tidak dapat diubah (Balode & Rozners, 2020). Dengan mengabaikan latar belakang sejarah dan dinamika sosial, interpretasi sempit semacam ini melahirkan sikap eksklusif yang sulit menerima pluralitas keyakinan dan budaya (Shataraa, 2013).

Fenomena fundamentalisme agama kerap kali muncul sebagai reaksi terhadap modernitas, globalisasi, dan ketidakpastian sosial yang dipersepsikan sebagai ancaman terhadap identitas keagamaan (Wilfred, 2021). Dalam situasi seperti ini, kelompok fundamentalis berusaha menegakkan pemahaman agama yang rigid dan cenderung menolak segala bentuk perbedaan. Sikap ini tak jarang diwujudkan dalam aktivisme politik yang intoleran, bahkan dalam bentuk kekerasan yang dibenarkan atas nama kesucian ajaran agama. Sebagai contoh, penolakan terhadap komunitas Ahmadiyah dan gereja-gereja minoritas di Indonesia seringkali lahir dari pola pikir fundamentalis semacam ini.

Untuk mencegah tafsir yang destruktif, Pizzulo (2007) menegaskan perlunya pendekatan historis-kritis dalam membaca teks keagamaan. Pendekatan ini membantu membedakan antara interpretasi yang sah dan manipulasi ideologis, serta mampu mengungkap "mitos kebenaran" yang sering kali menjadi tameng bagi kekerasan dan eksklusi. Selain itu, penelitian psikologis menunjukkan bahwa fundamentalisme berkaitan erat dengan kekakuan kognitif, faktor kepribadian, lingkungan sosial, dan pendidikan yang mempengaruhi cara individu memahami dan mengamalkan ajaran agama (Jakubowska & Oniszczenko, 2010; Yelderman, 2018).

Lebih jauh lagi, proses penerjemahan teks suci ke dalam berbagai bahasa dan budaya selalu melibatkan adaptasi linguistik dan kultural yang tidak bisa dilepaskan dari pemahaman lokal (Eryılmaz, 2021; Vorobyev, Fatkullina, & Saitbattalov, 2023). Namun fundamentalisme justru cenderung menolak keragaman tafsir ini dan berusaha memaksakan satu versi kebenaran yang ahistoris. Dalam konteks globalisasi, Wilfred (2021) mencatat bahwa fundamentalisme berupaya menciptakan keimanan "murni" yang melepaskan diri dari ruang dan waktu, suatu sikap yang justru memperbesar jurang intoleransi dan konflik.

Kedua, fenomena fundamentalisme agama memperparah dinamika intoleransi dengan mendorong sikap eksklusif yang menolak pluralitas. Fundamentalisme ditandai oleh pandangan yang kaku terhadap ajaran agama, di mana teks-teks suci dimaknai secara literal dan dianggap sebagai kebenaran mutlak yang tidak dapat ditawar (Moaddel & Karabenick, 2018). Pola pikir ini melahirkan dikotomi hitam-putih yang membagi dunia menjadi "kita" yang benar dan "mereka" yang sesat. Dalam konteks ini, hanya ada satu

kebenaran absolut, sementara pandangan dan keyakinan lain dianggap sebagai ancaman terhadap kemurnian agama (Vorster, 2008).

Sikap eksklusif ini tidak hanya menolak keberagaman keyakinan, tetapi juga sering kali memicu isolasi sosial dan intoleransi terhadap kelompok yang berbeda. Sebagaimana dijelaskan oleh Brooks (2005), kelompok fundamentalis cenderung menarik diri dari budaya dominan untuk menjaga "kemurnian" doktrin mereka, yang pada gilirannya mempersempit ruang dialog dan memperbesar potensi konflik. Di Indonesia, fundamentalisme semacam ini tampak nyata dalam perlakuan diskriminatif terhadap komunitas Ahmadiyah dan Syiah, yang dituduh menyimpang dari "ajaran yang sah" dan karenanya dipinggirkan bahkan menjadi korban kekerasan.

Lebih jauh, fundamentalisme sering muncul sebagai respons terhadap modernitas, sekularisasi, dan perubahan sosial yang dipandang mengancam tatanan moral tradisional (Orekhovskaya et al., 2019). Dalam upaya mempertahankan identitas keagamaan di tengah arus globalisasi, kelompok-kelompok ini kerap memobilisasi keyakinan untuk menolak pluralisme dan bahkan membenarkan tindakan ekstrem (Brekke, 2011). Bahkan, sebagaimana dicatat Ukah (2011), fundamentalisme tidak hanya menjadi wacana teologis, tetapi juga berdampak pada tindakan sosial dan politik yang merusak kohesi masyarakat.

Dalam kerangka ini, penting ditegaskan bahwa fundamentalisme bukanlah ekspresi asli ajaran agama itu sendiri, melainkan hasil konstruksi sosial yang berakar pada kecemasan identitas dan ketidakmampuan menerima keragaman. Oleh sebab itu, mendorong tafsir inklusif yang berpijak pada nilai-nilai kemanusiaan dan membuka ruang dialog lintas iman merupakan langkah strategis untuk menanggulangi eksklusivitas dan intoleransi yang lahir dari fundamentalisme agama.

Ketiga, politisasi agama merupakan faktor krusial yang memperumit dinamika intoleransi dalam masyarakat modern. Ketika agama digunakan sebagai alat politik, nilai-nilai moral dan spiritual yang seharusnya menjadi fondasi perdamaian justru tereduksi menjadi simbol dan slogan demi meraih dukungan kekuasaan. Brewer (2021) menegaskan bahwa keterikatan agama dengan politik cenderung memperbesar konflik dan mempersempit ruang bagi resolusi damai. Dalam konteks ini, elite politik kerap memanipulasi

sentimen keagamaan untuk memobilisasi massa, memperkuat identitas eksklusif, dan meraih legitimasi, yang pada akhirnya memicu polarisasi sosial (Campbell, 2020).

Fenomena ini terlihat jelas dalam banyak kasus di Indonesia, salah satunya Pilkada DKI Jakarta 2017, di mana sentimen agama secara sistematis dimanfaatkan untuk menggalang dukungan elektoral, menciptakan ketegangan sosial, dan memperdalam jurang perbedaan identitas (George, 2016). Proses politisasi ini memperlihatkan bahwa agama, yang seharusnya bersifat transenden dan universal, diseret ke dalam arena politik identitas yang sempit dan penuh kepentingan pragmatis (Foret, 2023). Di sini agama direduksi menjadi alat "cultural defense" yang bukan hanya melanggengkan eksklusi terhadap kelompok minoritas, tetapi juga memicu resistensi terhadap modernisasi dan sekularisasi (Halikiopoulou, 2017).

Lebih jauh, politisasi agama bukan sekadar strategi politik domestik, melainkan juga dapat memicu ekstremisme dan kekerasan ketika agama dijadikan legitimasi untuk tindakan radikal (Mkrtumova, Dosanova, Karabulatova, & Nifontov, 2016). Kondisi ini memperparah fragmentasi sosial dan menurunkan otoritas moral pemimpin agama, sebagaimana dicatat oleh Williamson et al. (2023), di mana pemuka agama yang terjebak dalam politik cenderung kehilangan kepercayaan komunitasnya. Ironisnya, dalam masyarakat yang semakin plural, politisasi agama justru menciptakan ketegangan baru yang menghambat kohesi sosial dan memperbesar ketidakpercayaan antar kelompok (Asad, 2011).

Untuk mencegah agar agama tidak terus-menerus dimanfaatkan secara destruktif, diperlukan penguatan ide-ide keagamaan yang mendorong pluralisme dan cinta kasih universal (Hiemstra, 2015; Hoffmann, Basedau, Gobien, & Prediger, 2020). Selain itu, memperluas dialog antarumat beragama dan menerapkan etika publik yang inklusif dapat menjadi strategi kunci untuk menanggulangi politisasi agama yang merusak dan mendorong terciptanya masyarakat yang lebih damai dan toleran (Kortner, 2023).

Pada dasarnya, ajaran agama tidak pernah secara inheren mendorong kekerasan atau intoleransi. Namun, tafsir atas ajaran agama dapat melenceng ketika dimanfaatkan untuk melayani kepentingan politik, ekonomi, dan kekuasaan. Tafsir agama yang eksklusif dan literal lahir bukan dalam ruang

hampa, melainkan merupakan hasil konstruksi sosial yang dipengaruhi oleh ketegangan identitas, dinamika politik, serta persaingan sumber daya (Juergensmeyer, 2005). Ketika suatu kelompok merasa terancam atau ingin memperkuat posisi hegemoniknya, narasi agama kerap kali dibingkai untuk memperkuat solidaritas internal melalui penciptaan musuh bersama, yang dalam banyak kasus adalah kelompok minoritas atau pihak yang dianggap "lain."

Proses ini dapat dilihat melalui lensa teori *identity politics*, di mana agama bukan sekadar keyakinan spiritual, tetapi juga identitas kolektif yang dapat dimobilisasi untuk memperkuat klaim politik (Esposito, 2002). Dalam masyarakat yang plural dan penuh kompetisi, seperti Indonesia, mayoritas keagamaan sering kali membingkai dirinya sebagai penjaga "kemurnian" atau "keaslian" moral bangsa. Simbol-simbol agama lalu digunakan untuk menjustifikasi eksklusi sosial, diskriminasi, bahkan kekerasan terhadap kelompok minoritas seperti Ahmadiyah, Syiah, atau komunitas gereja tertentu. Hal ini sejalan dengan konsep *ingroup-outgroup* dalam psikologi sosial, di mana perbedaan keyakinan dimanfaatkan untuk menciptakan batas identitas yang tegas, yang ujungnya memperkuat posisi mayoritas dan memarjinalkan minoritas.

Selain itu, tafsir eksklusif sering kali diperkuat oleh elite politik dan keagamaan yang berkepentingan dalam menjaga atau memperluas basis kekuasaan mereka. Seperti diungkap oleh Campbell (2020), politisasi agama menciptakan distorsi nilai yang pada akhirnya menjadikan agama sebagai instrumen kekuasaan, bukan lagi pedoman moral universal. Hal ini menjelaskan mengapa intoleransi agama cenderung meningkat dalam periode-periode kontestasi politik seperti pemilu, di mana sentimen keagamaan dimobilisasi secara sengaja untuk mendulang dukungan.

Dalam kerangka ini, kekerasan dan intoleransi berbasis agama tidak bisa dipahami semata-mata sebagai persoalan teologis, tetapi juga sebagai gejala dari struktur sosial-politik yang timpang, persaingan ekonomi, dan manipulasi simbolik oleh pihak-pihak yang berkepentingan. Oleh sebab itu, upaya untuk membangun toleransi beragama harus mencakup pembacaan ulang ajaran agama dalam kerangka kontekstual, serta reformasi institusional yang mencegah agama dijadikan alat politik praktis.

Meskipun berbagai konflik keagamaan tampak seolah-olah berakar pada ajaran agama itu sendiri, sesungguhnya agama bukanlah sumber kekerasan. Kekerasan dan intoleransi muncul dari cara agama dipahami, ditafsirkan, dan terutama ketika ajaran agama dipolitisasi untuk kepentingan kekuasaan. Dalam kerangka teori konflik sosial (Coser, 1956), konflik bukanlah sekadar akibat perbedaan keyakinan, melainkan refleksi dari ketimpangan distribusi kekuasaan, sumber daya, dan dominasi sosial. Elite politik sering kali memainkan peran sentral dalam memperburuk ketegangan antar kelompok dengan memanfaatkan identitas agama untuk memperkuat legitimasi politik mereka, seperti yang terlihat dalam berbagai kasus intoleransi di Indonesia. Karena itu, interpretasi agama yang eksklusif dan literal menjadi alat yang ampuh dalam memproduksi narasi "kami vs. mereka," yang membenarkan diskriminasi, eksklusi, bahkan kekerasan terhadap kelompok minoritas.

Faktor Internal dan Eksternal yang Mempengaruhi

Munculnya sikap toleran maupun intoleran dalam kehidupan beragama tidak pernah lahir dalam ruang hampa, melainkan merupakan produk dari proses sosial yang kompleks. Setiap ekspresi keagamaan selalu dipengaruhi oleh setidaknya dua faktor utama: faktor internal yang bersumber dari ajaran, tafsir, dan kepemimpinan keagamaan, serta faktor eksternal yang berkaitan dengan dinamika politik, ekonomi, dan perkembangan teknologi komunikasi. Dalam kerangka teori konstruksi sosial yang dikemukakan oleh Peter L. Berger dan Thomas Luckmann (1979), realitas sosial—termasuk realitas keagamaan—tidak bersifat objektif dan tetap, melainkan dibangun melalui interaksi sosial, proses institusionalisasi, dan internalisasi nilai oleh individu dan kelompok. Oleh karena itu, perilaku toleran atau intoleran bukan semata-mata cerminan "ajaran murni" agama, tetapi juga sangat dipengaruhi oleh bagaimana ajaran tersebut dipahami, dimaknai, dan dikontekstualisasikan dalam realitas sosial yang terus berubah. Interaksi yang dinamis antara faktor internal dan eksternal inilah yang pada akhirnya membentuk konfigurasi sikap umat beragama terhadap keragaman dan perbedaan.

Dalam memahami dinamika toleransi dan intoleransi dalam masyarakat beragama, penting untuk menyadari bahwa keduanya tidak semata-mata lahir dari ajaran agama itu sendiri, melainkan dari cara agama

dipahami, ditafsirkan, dan dipraktikkan oleh para pemeluknya. Di sinilah faktor internal berperan besar dalam membentuk sikap umat beragama terhadap perbedaan. Faktor internal merujuk pada dimensi-dimensi yang bersumber dari dalam tradisi agama itu sendiri, seperti ajaran teologi, pendekatan tafsir terhadap teks-teks suci, dan kepemimpinan keagamaan yang mengarahkan pemahaman serta perilaku umat. Masing-masing elemen ini memiliki potensi untuk menjadi kekuatan yang memperkuat toleransi, namun juga dapat menjadi pemicu intoleransi jika didekati secara sempit dan eksklusif. Oleh karena itu, memahami faktor internal menjadi langkah penting dalam membangun kerukunan sosial berbasis pemahaman agama yang sehat dan inklusif.

Pada tataran teologi, setiap agama besar sesungguhnya memiliki ajaran-ajaran yang menekankan nilai-nilai universal seperti kasih sayang, penghormatan terhadap sesama, dan kedamaian. Dalam Islam, konsep *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (QS. Al-Anbiya: 107) menjadi prinsip dasar bahwa Islam adalah rahmat bagi seluruh alam, bukan hanya bagi pemeluknya sendiri. Sejarah Islam menunjukkan bahwa pada masa Khulafaur Rasyidin, komunitas non-Muslim dilindungi dan diberikan kebebasan menjalankan keyakinan mereka (Othman, 2023). Demikian pula dalam tradisi Kristen, nilai *agape* atau kasih tanpa syarat menjadi inti ajaran Yesus, yang mengajarkan bahwa penghormatan terhadap martabat setiap manusia adalah fondasi iman (Žalec, 2018). Sementara itu, ajaran *ahimsa* dalam Hindu dan Buddha, yang berarti non-kekerasan, memerintahkan umatnya untuk menghormati kehidupan dalam segala bentuknya dan menolak segala tindakan yang merusak atau menyakiti makhluk lain (Awang, Ramli, & Rahman, 2021).

Perbedaan muncul ketika ajaran-ajaran ini ditafsirkan secara literal tanpa mempertimbangkan konteks sosial-historisnya. Tafsir tekstual cenderung melahirkan pemahaman eksklusif dan absolut yang dapat menumbuhkan sikap intoleran terhadap penganut keyakinan lain (Craig, 2016). Sebaliknya, pendekatan kontekstual yang berangkat dari semangat kemanusiaan dan kasih dapat memperluas cakrawala keberagaman dan mendorong dialog lintas agama (Barth, 2014). Di sinilah peran penting pemimpin agama, seperti ulama, pendeta, dan biksu, dalam menafsirkan ajaran dan membentuk opini umat menjadi krusial. Kepemimpinan agama

yang progresif dapat mempromosikan nilai-nilai toleransi dan menahan laju eksklusivisme yang merusak harmoni sosial (Žalec & Pavlíková, 2019).

Aspek penting lain dari faktor internal yang memengaruhi sikap toleransi atau intoleransi beragama adalah cara umat memahami dan menafsirkan teks-teks suci. Dua pendekatan utama yang sering dikemukakan dalam studi keagamaan adalah tafsir literal (tekstual) dan tafsir kontekstual. Tafsir literal berupaya memahami makna teks secara harfiah dan apa adanya, tanpa mempertimbangkan konteks sosial, historis, maupun budaya saat teks tersebut diturunkan. Pendekatan ini, meskipun tampak sederhana, sering kali bermasalah, terutama ketika berhadapan dengan teks-teks kuno yang konteks aslinya telah hilang atau berubah (Ramírez-Ludeña, 2023). Tafsir literal cenderung melahirkan klaim kebenaran absolut yang berpotensi memicu sikap eksklusif dan intoleran.

Sebaliknya, tafsir kontekstual memandang bahwa teks suci tidak dapat dipisahkan dari realitas sosial, politik, dan budaya di mana ia lahir dan berkembang. Pendekatan ini menekankan pentingnya membaca teks dalam terang konteks historis, situasi sosial, bahkan pengalaman personal yang membentuk pemaknaannya (Borkowski, 2019; Stepanova, 2017). Misalnya, tokoh-tokoh seperti Thomas Jefferson dan Leo Tolstoy menafsirkan Injil secara pribadi untuk menekankan nilai-nilai moral universal, berbeda dengan tafsir institusional yang kaku (Stepanova, 2017). Demikian pula, dalam tradisi Islam, pendekatan kontekstual dapat membuka ruang bagi pemahaman yang lebih toleran terhadap pluralitas dan dinamika masyarakat modern.

Perbedaan tafsir ini juga terlihat dalam sejarah agama-agama besar, di mana pendekatan alegoris telah digunakan untuk mempertahankan relevansi teks suci ketika berhadapan dengan kritik atau perbedaan pandangan (Kahlos, 2012). Sementara itu, dalam konteks Katolik Roma, tafsir sering diperebutkan antara pendekatan intelektual rasional dan pengalaman mistis, yang mencerminkan ketegangan antara kekuasaan institusional dan spiritualitas personal (Ponzo, 2024). Oleh karena itu, cara sebuah komunitas beragama menafsirkan teksnya sangat menentukan apakah agama tersebut menjadi kekuatan yang mendorong toleransi atau justru memperkuat intoleransi.

Elemen penting ketiga dari faktor internal yang mempengaruhi toleransi dan intoleransi beragama adalah peran kepemimpinan agama. Ulama, pendeta, biksu, dan tokoh keagamaan lainnya memiliki posisi strategis dalam membentuk opini dan sikap umat terhadap perbedaan keyakinan. Kepemimpinan agama tidak hanya berkaitan dengan penyampaian ajaran teologis, tetapi juga memiliki fungsi sosial sebagai mediator dan agen perdamaian di tengah masyarakat yang majemuk (Sandal, 2022; Sisk, 2011). Dalam situasi konflik, tokoh agama yang berkomitmen pada nilai-nilai perdamaian dapat memainkan peran vital dalam mendinginkan ketegangan dan mendorong rekonsiliasi, sebagaimana terlihat dalam berbagai konteks seperti Irlandia Utara, Bosnia, maupun Indonesia.

Selain itu, pemimpin agama juga berperan penting dalam mempromosikan dialog lintas iman yang membuka ruang bagi kesalingpahaman dan menghancurkan stereotip antar komunitas. Inisiatif seperti *Nigeria Inter-Religious Council* (NIREC) menunjukkan bagaimana keterlibatan tokoh agama dalam dialog dan pembangunan perdamaian mampu mengurangi ketegangan sosial dan menciptakan harmoni (Williams, 2023). Di Indonesia, pendekatan serupa diadopsi melalui forum-forum keagamaan lokal yang mengedepankan kearifan lokal dan moderasi beragama (Pajarianto, Pribadi, & Sari, 2022).

Dimensi edukatif yang melekat pada peran kepemimpinan agama sesungguhnya merupakan elemen yang tak terpisahkan dari upaya membangun budaya toleransi yang berakar kuat dalam masyarakat pluralistik. Melalui berbagai strategi pendidikan yang menekankan pemahaman lintas keyakinan, para pemuka agama memiliki kapasitas untuk mentransformasi wacana eksklusif menjadi ruang dialog yang konstruktif. Salah satu contoh yang menonjol adalah program *World Religions Course* yang diimplementasikan di Modesto, California, di mana pembelajaran mengenai keragaman agama telah terbukti mampu menggeser paradigma pelajar menuju sikap yang lebih inklusif dan saling menghargai (Lester & Roberts, 2011). Model semacam ini menegaskan pentingnya literasi keagamaan sebagai prasyarat bagi terciptanya masyarakat yang kohesif.

Fenomena serupa juga tampak dalam konteks Pakistan melalui inisiatif *Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy* (CCRL), yang secara aktif membangun jembatan pemahaman antar kelompok agama dalam rangka melawan

gelombang radikalisme dan intoleransi berbasis keyakinan (Khan, 2024). Pendekatan ini menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman lintas budaya keagamaan tak hanya bersifat normatif, melainkan menjadi kebutuhan strategis dalam menghadapi eskalasi ekstremisme yang kian mengglobal.

Lebih jauh, para tokoh agama tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai pengasuh spiritual, tetapi juga sebagai agen advokasi sosial dan politik yang memperjuangkan nilai-nilai pluralisme serta keadilan substantif, baik di level lokal maupun internasional (Mbote et al., 2022). Komitmen ini kian menemukan urgensinya dalam situasi krisis, seperti pandemi COVID-19, di mana para pemimpin agama berperan signifikan dalam mendiseminasikan pesan-pesan kesehatan publik, meredam ketegangan sosial, serta menghindarkan masyarakat dari politisasi isu kesehatan yang berpotensi merusak solidaritas komunal (Kangamina et al., 2022; Sobers, Greaves, Quimby, & Harewood, 2023). Dengan demikian, pemuka agama tidak hanya menjadi penjaga moralitas spiritual, tetapi juga katalisator perubahan sosial yang visioner dan transformatif.

Namun demikian, tantangan tetap ada. Sebagian pemimpin agama menghadapi dilema antara mempertahankan ortodoksi doktrinal dan mendorong keterbukaan terhadap keberagaman. Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan khusus mampu meningkatkan *intellectual humility* dan *cognitive flexibility* di kalangan pemuka agama sehingga mereka lebih terbuka pada perbedaan dan mengurangi sikap agresif (Lubis & Sianipar, 2022). Dengan demikian, masa depan toleransi sangat bergantung pada sejauh mana para pemimpin agama mampu membaca realitas sosial secara kontekstual dan mengedepankan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan di atas politik identitas.

Contoh konkret dari bagaimana tafsir dan kepemimpinan agama membentuk sikap umat dapat dilihat pada dua organisasi Islam terbesar di Indonesia, yakni *Muhammadiyah* dan *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU). Secara teologis dan ideologis, kedua organisasi ini sama-sama mendukung prinsip *Islam Wasathiyah* atau moderasi beragama yang menolak ekstremisme dan kekerasan. *Muhammadiyah* dengan pendekatan purifikasi ajaran dan penekanan pada rasionalitas, serta *NU* dengan pendekatan tradisional berbasis *pesantren* dan nilai kearifan lokal, keduanya mendukung kerukunan umat beragama dan perlindungan terhadap kelompok minoritas.

Namun demikian, pada tingkat akar rumput, variasi tafsir yang muncul di kalangan anggota dan simpatisan dapat memunculkan keragaman sikap yang tidak selalu sejalan dengan pandangan moderat elite organisasi. Di beberapa daerah, interpretasi keagamaan yang cenderung literal dan konservatif masih bisa ditemukan, yang kadang memicu resistensi terhadap pluralitas atau bahkan menumbuhkan sikap intoleran. Hal ini memperlihatkan bahwa keberhasilan ide moderasi sangat ditentukan oleh efektivitas transfer nilai dari tingkat elite ke level komunitas bawah.

Sosok seperti Abdurrahman Wahid atau Gus Dur menjadi contoh cemerlang dari pemimpin agama progresif yang mampu memanfaatkan otoritas keagamaannya untuk memperjuangkan toleransi dan hak-hak kelompok minoritas. Melalui visi *pribumisasi Islam*, Gus Dur mengajak umat Islam untuk merekonsiliasi identitas keagamaan dengan realitas kebangsaan yang plural. Ia juga secara tegas menentang diskriminasi terhadap kelompok-kelompok marjinal seperti Ahmadiyah, Syiah, dan komunitas Tionghoa. Di bawah kepemimpinannya, NU bukan hanya menjadi pelopor dialog antaragama, tetapi juga benteng bagi prinsip *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

Sebaliknya, ketika tafsir keagamaan dikonstruksi secara rigid dan absolut—seperti dalam kelompok-kelompok Islam konservatif dan fundamentalis—agama justru bisa menjadi alat eksklusivisme yang membatasi ruang perjumpaan antarkelompok. Tafsir sempit terhadap konsep *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* atau *jihad*, misalnya, kerap dimanfaatkan oleh aktor politik atau kelompok radikal untuk memobilisasi dukungan berbasis sentimen keagamaan. Fenomena ini sejalan dengan analisis Esposito (2002) tentang bagaimana politisasi agama dan fundamentalisme tumbuh subur ketika agama dipahami secara hitam-putih dan kehilangan dimensi humanistiknya.

Namun, faktor internal saja tidak cukup untuk menjelaskan sepenuhnya dinamika toleransi dan intoleransi dalam masyarakat beragama. Sikap dan perilaku keagamaan umat juga sangat dipengaruhi oleh berbagai faktor eksternal yang melingkupinya. Kondisi politik, ekonomi, media, dan bahkan perkembangan teknologi digital memainkan peran krusial dalam membentuk cara orang memaknai ajaran agama dan merespons perbedaan. Dalam perspektif konstruksi sosial Peter L. Berger (1979), realitas sosial termasuk realitas keagamaan selalu dibentuk, dipertahankan, dan diubah

melalui interaksi dengan lingkungan sosial yang lebih luas. Oleh karena itu, penting untuk memahami bahwa agama tidak berdiri dalam ruang hampa, melainkan selalu berinteraksi secara dinamis dengan konteks eksternal yang dapat memperkuat atau justru merusak nilai-nilai toleransi.

Di ranah politik, agama kerap kali menjadi instrumen strategis yang dimobilisasi untuk memperoleh kekuasaan dan memperkuat identitas kelompok. Politisasi agama—yakni penggunaan simbol, narasi, dan identitas keagamaan dalam kompetisi politik—tidak hanya menciptakan segregasi sosial, tetapi juga memperbesar potensi konflik dan intoleransi. Sebagaimana diungkapkan oleh Grzymala-Busse (2012), agama memainkan peran sentral dalam membentuk perilaku politik dan kebijakan publik karena ia menyediakan kerangka moral dan identitas yang kuat bagi pemeluknya. Dalam konteks ini, identitas keagamaan sering dijadikan alat untuk memobilisasi dukungan politik dan mengkonsolidasikan kekuasaan, sebagaimana terlihat dalam berbagai pemilihan umum di banyak negara, termasuk Indonesia.

Contoh nyata politisasi agama di Indonesia dapat dilihat dalam Pilkada DKI Jakarta 2017, ketika isu keagamaan dieksploitasi untuk mempengaruhi preferensi pemilih dan menciptakan polarisasi tajam di tengah masyarakat. Azis et al. (2023) menunjukkan bahwa polarisasi identitas berbasis agama berkontribusi terhadap menguatnya konflik dan segregasi sosial, terutama ketika dikombinasikan dengan narasi etno-nasionalis. Politisasi agama juga tampak di negara lain, seperti Turki, di mana pemerintah memanfaatkan institusi keagamaan seperti khutbah Jumat untuk memperkuat identitas religius-nasional dan memperluas legitimasi politik (Ongur, 2020).

Lebih jauh lagi, Vincent (2022) menggambarkan bagaimana politik identitas berbasis agama dan etnis di India, khususnya di West Bengal, memperlihatkan pola serupa: politisi memanfaatkan sentimen agama untuk memperkuat posisi politiknya. Di sisi lain, studi Calfano (2021) menegaskan bahwa komunikasi keagamaan melalui media memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk opini publik dan memperkuat polarisasi. Hal ini memperlihatkan bahwa narasi keagamaan tidak hanya memengaruhi perilaku politik di tingkat elit, tetapi juga meresap hingga ke akar rumput melalui media dan komunikasi publik.

Pada dasarnya, agama yang seharusnya menjadi sumber kedamaian justru bisa berubah menjadi sumber ketegangan ketika dijadikan alat politik. Identitas keagamaan yang dipolitisasi menciptakan dikotomi "kami vs mereka" yang membahayakan kohesi sosial dan mempersempit ruang toleransi. Oleh karena itu, seperti dikemukakan oleh Pace (2013), perlunya refleksi kritis terhadap hubungan antara agama, identitas, dan kekuasaan menjadi krusial untuk mencegah terjadinya eskalasi konflik berbasis agama.

Selain faktor politik, dimensi ekonomi juga memegang peran penting dalam memicu maupun meredam potensi konflik berbasis agama. Ketimpangan sosial-ekonomi menciptakan kondisi yang rentan terhadap munculnya rasa ketidakadilan, kecemburuan sosial, dan pada akhirnya—konflik horizontal. Dalam masyarakat yang plural dan multietnis seperti Indonesia, ketimpangan ekonomi antar kelompok sosial atau etnis, yang oleh Han et al. (2014) disebut sebagai *horizontal inequality*, menjadi salah satu penyebab utama mobilisasi politik berbasis identitas. Ketika sekelompok masyarakat merasa terpinggirkan secara ekonomi, mereka cenderung lebih mudah dimobilisasi untuk menuntut perubahan, bahkan dengan cara-cara yang ekstrem.

Hillesund dan Østby (Hillesund & Østby, 2020) menegaskan bahwa ketimpangan yang bersifat identitas, baik berbasis etnis maupun agama, meningkatkan risiko kekerasan politik dan sosial. Situasi ini diperparah oleh fenomena *relative deprivation*, yakni ketika persepsi ketertinggalan ekonomi mendorong rasa frustasi kolektif. Ketimpangan yang tajam tidak hanya melemahkan kohesi sosial tetapi juga memperbesar polarisasi dan fragmentasi masyarakat (Chakravarty, 2015; Goubin, 2018). Ketika sumber daya, kesempatan, dan akses terhadap layanan publik terdistribusi secara tidak adil, masyarakat cenderung menarik diri dari keterlibatan sosial dan menguatkan solidaritas primordial berbasis agama atau etnis.

Dalam konteks Indonesia, ketimpangan ekonomi di berbagai daerah berpotensi memperbesar konflik, terutama ketika isu-isu identitas dan agama dipolitisasi dalam situasi sosial yang tertekan. Houle et al. (2022) menemukan bahwa ketimpangan antara kelompok identitas menjadi salah satu pemicu utama kerusuhan sosial di berbagai belahan dunia. Hal serupa terlihat di Peru, di mana eksklusi sosial dan disparitas ekonomi memicu konflik yang berkepanjangan (Lauracio Ticona et al., 2024). Ketidakadilan

dalam akses terhadap kebutuhan dasar seperti air bersih, sanitasi, dan perumahan di kawasan kumuh juga menjadi faktor yang memperburuk ketegangan sosial (Abdulhadi, Bailey, & Van Noorloos, 2024).

Oleh sebab itu, penyelesaian konflik dan penguatan toleransi tak cukup hanya melalui pendekatan kultural atau teologis, melainkan harus diimbangi dengan upaya sistematis untuk mengurangi ketimpangan dan memperluas akses ekonomi. Gagasan Galtung tentang *positive peace* sangat relevan di sini: perdamaian sejati hanya dapat dicapai ketika akar struktural ketidakadilan sosial-ekonomi diatasi.

Perkembangan media sosial dalam dua dekade terakhir telah membawa perubahan besar dalam dinamika konflik berbasis agama. Media sosial berfungsi sebagai ruang publik baru yang mempercepat penyebaran informasi sekaligus memperbesar potensi polarisasi dan konflik. Zeitzoff (2017) menyoroti bagaimana media sosial menurunkan biaya komunikasi, meningkatkan kecepatan penyebaran pesan, dan memperbesar eskalasi konflik dalam waktu singkat. Tidak hanya sebagai saluran informasi, media sosial juga menjadi arena *contentious politics*, di mana elite politik, pemimpin agama, hingga kelompok ekstremis memobilisasi dukungan dengan memainkan isu-isu keagamaan yang sensitif (Hjarvard & Lundby, 2018).

Dalam konteks Indonesia, penelitian Faizin et al. (2024) menunjukkan bahwa selama periode pemilu, media sosial seperti Twitter digunakan secara masif untuk memperkuat narasi intoleransi dan radikalisme, yang berujung pada konflik horizontal di tingkat akar rumput. Fenomena serupa terjadi di Turki dan Israel, di mana framing media memperkuat dikotomi relijius-sekular, sehingga memperdalam fragmentasi sosial (Evans & Kaynak, 2015). Tidak jarang, konflik yang bermula di ruang virtual bertransformasi menjadi aksi nyata di dunia offline, sebagaimana diuraikan oleh Pimay dan Riyadi (2023) dalam studi tentang transisi konflik keagamaan dari dunia maya ke realitas.

Namun demikian, media sosial tidak selalu memperburuk situasi. Studi di Myanmar menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media sosial seperti Facebook justru dapat meningkatkan toleransi antar agama dan etnis (Samet, Arriola, & Matanock, 2024). Media sosial juga membuka peluang bagi pemuka agama dan masyarakat sipil untuk mempromosikan narasi perdamaian dan

keberagaman. Marei (2024) mencatat bahwa para pengguna media sosial mampu mempengaruhi pemaknaan keberagamaan dan mendorong pembentukan identitas religius yang lebih cair dan reflektif.

Di sisi lain, dinamika media sosial juga menghadirkan tantangan etis. Maraknya *prosumerism (*gabungan antara produksi dan konsumsi konten oleh individu) menyebabkan komersialisasi agama dan meningkatnya individualisme, yang dapat menggerus otoritas tradisional agama (Mathew & Tholath, 2023). Hal ini memperlihatkan bahwa peran media sosial dalam isu toleransi keagamaan sangat ambivalen: di satu sisi berpotensi menjadi jembatan pemahaman, di sisi lain menjadi alat provokasi yang memicu konflik. Oleh karena itu, White (2018) menekankan pentingnya strategi pencegahan konflik berbasis media yang melibatkan aktor lintas agama dan pemangku kebijakan secara proaktif.

Faktor-faktor eksternal seperti ketimpangan ekonomi dan peran media sosial tidak hanya memicu intoleransi beragama secara sporadis, tetapi memperkuatnya secara sistemik. Di berbagai wilayah Indonesia, seperti Poso dan Ambon, konflik sosial keagamaan sering kali dipicu oleh kecemburuan ekonomi yang terakumulasi akibat ketimpangan distribusi sumber daya dan akses ekonomi. Ketika satu kelompok merasa termarginalkan secara ekonomi dan politik, perasaan ketidakadilan tersebut mudah dimanipulasi oleh aktor-aktor politik atau radikal yang mengangkat identitas keagamaan sebagai simbol perlawanan. Inilah yang oleh Galtung (1996) disebut sebagai "*negative peace*"—ketika kekerasan fisik memang berhenti, namun ketimpangan struktural tetap menjadi bara dalam sekam.

Lebih jauh, penyebaran ujaran kebencian di media sosial memperburuk ketegangan yang sudah ada. Misalnya, dalam Pilkada DKI Jakarta 2017, media sosial dipenuhi narasi keagamaan yang memecah belah, membentuk polarisasi tajam antar kelompok, hingga memicu demonstrasi besar-besaran. Kondisi ini menunjukkan bahwa media sosial bukan sekadar platform netral, tetapi medan pertempuran naratif yang memperkuat identitas eksklusif sekaligus memperlemah jembatan antar kelompok. Menurut Galtung (1996), tanpa upaya menciptakan *positive peace*—yakni keadilan sosial, ekonomi, dan budaya—intoleransi akan terus berulang dalam berbagai bentuk, bahkan jika kekerasan fisik dapat ditekan.

Pada akhirnya, toleransi dan intoleransi dalam kehidupan beragama bukanlah produk tunggal dari ajaran teologis ataupun struktur sosial semata, melainkan merupakan hasil interaksi dinamis dan kompleks antara keduanya. Faktor internal seperti tafsir ajaran agama, kepemimpinan spiritual, serta penekanan pada nilai-nilai universal seperti *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, *agape*, dan *ahimsa*, akan sangat dipengaruhi oleh faktor eksternal seperti situasi politik, ketimpangan ekonomi, dan dinamika media sosial. Ketika tafsir agama bersifat rigid dan eksklusif, serta diperparah oleh ketidakadilan sosial-ekonomi dan politisasi identitas, potensi lahirnya intoleransi semakin besar. Johan Galtung (1996) telah menegaskan bahwa perdamaian sejati (*positive peace*) tidak cukup hanya ditandai dengan ketiadaan kekerasan (*negative peace*), melainkan juga harus disertai dengan keadilan struktural yang melindungi hak-hak semua kelompok, termasuk minoritas.

Jika ketimpangan ekonomi dan ketidaksetaraan sosial dibiarkan tanpa perbaikan, dan narasi-narasi agama terus dipelintir untuk kepentingan politik atau mobilisasi identitas, maka ruang bagi intoleransi akan selalu tersedia. Fenomena seperti penyebaran ujaran kebencian di media sosial, kriminalisasi minoritas agama, hingga pembiaran kekerasan berbasis identitas, memperlihatkan bagaimana interaksi faktor internal dan eksternal menciptakan ketegangan yang berpotensi merusak kohesi sosial. Oleh karena itu, langkah-langkah sistematis perlu dilakukan: pertama, mendorong interpretasi agama yang kontekstual, moderat, dan humanistik; kedua, memperkuat peran negara sebagai pelindung konstitusi dan penegak hukum yang adil; dan ketiga, memperluas pendidikan toleransi lintas agama dan budaya sejak dini. Hanya dengan cara inilah, masyarakat yang damai, adil, dan inklusif dapat terwujud.

Penutup

Dalam menghadapi kompleksitas realitas sosial Indonesia yang plural, essay ini menegaskan bahwa agama memiliki dua wajah yang saling bertolak belakang: di satu sisi, ia berpotensi menjadi sumber toleransi, kedamaian, dan kohesi sosial, namun di sisi lain, dapat pula dijadikan justifikasi bagi tindakan intoleransi, diskriminasi, bahkan kekerasan. Argumen utama yang dibangun menunjukkan bahwa kedua wajah ini bukan merupakan kodrat ajaran agama itu sendiri, melainkan produk dari cara agama dipahami,

ditafsirkan, dan dipraktikkan dalam konteks sosial, politik, dan ekonomi yang dinamis.

Pembahasan telah memperlihatkan bahwa faktor internal, seperti ajaran teologis, cara penafsiran teks suci, dan peran kepemimpinan agama, sangat mempengaruhi sikap keberagamaan masyarakat. Namun demikian, faktor eksternal seperti politisasi agama, ketimpangan ekonomi, dan pengaruh media sosial juga memainkan peran krusial dalam memperbesar atau meredam intoleransi. Interaksi antara faktor internal dan eksternal inilah yang menentukan wajah agama di ruang publik.

Signifikansi temuan ini terletak pada penegasan bahwa membangun toleransi beragama tidak bisa dilakukan hanya melalui pendekatan teologis semata. Upaya tersebut harus diiringi dengan reformasi sosial-politik, penguatan keadilan struktural, serta pemanfaatan media dan pendidikan sebagai alat untuk membangun kesadaran lintas identitas. Teori Johan Galtung tentang *positive peace* mengingatkan kita bahwa ketiadaan kekerasan saja tidak cukup; perdamaian sejati membutuhkan keadilan sosial yang mencakup hak dan martabat semua kelompok dalam masyarakat.

Namun, essay ini juga menyadari keterbatasannya. Masih banyak faktor yang mempengaruhi dinamika toleransi dan intoleransi, seperti peran globalisasi, arus migrasi, perkembangan artificial intelligence dalam penyebaran disinformasi, hingga dinamika identitas gender dan seksual dalam masyarakat beragama—yang belum terbahas dalam tulisan ini. Ini membuka ruang bagi penelitian lebih lanjut yang lebih transdisipliner dan kontekstual.

Dalam kerangka yang lebih luas, isu toleransi beragama tidak hanya relevan bagi studi agama, tetapi juga bagi studi perdamaian, hubungan internasional, politik identitas, dan pembangunan berkelanjutan. Dalam dunia yang semakin terhubung namun juga terpolarisasi, memahami dan mengelola keragaman agama bukan sekadar kebutuhan lokal, tetapi menjadi prasyarat bagi stabilitas sosial dan perdamaian global. Dengan demikian, upaya memperkuat toleransi harus menjadi agenda bersama, melibatkan seluruh elemen masyarakat lintas agama, etnis, dan ideologi, untuk membangun masa depan yang damai, adil, dan inklusif bagi semua.

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PEDOMAN PENULISAN NASKAH
TASHWIRUL AFKAR

A. PERSYARATAN UMUM PENULISAN NASKAH

1. Naskah belum pernah dipublikasikan atau tidak sedang dalam proses pengajuan untuk publikasi ke media lain dan tidak mengandung unsur plagiat dengan dilampiri pernyataan tertulis dari penulis.
2. Naskah ditulis dalam bahasa Indonesia atau bahasa Inggris dengan kerapatan baris 1 spasi, *font Cambria* 12, ukuran kertas B5, *margin* atas 2.2 cm., bawah 2.2 cm., kiri 2.2 cm., dan kanan 2.2 cm.
3. Panjang naskah minimal 4000 kata (sekitar 15 halaman) sudah termasuk gambar, grafik/ tabel (jika ada) dan daftar pustaka yang menyertainya.
4. Naskah harus disertai dengan abstrak dalam bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia.
5. Naskah dikirim melalui online submission Tashwirul Afkar dengan alamat https://tashwirulafkar.net/index.php/afkar/about/submissions (klik daftar/register).
6. Semua naskah yang masuk ke redaksi akan melalui proses *blind review* oleh mitra bebestari setelah review oleh redaksi. Naskah yang dimuat akan disunting kembali oleh redaksi tanpa mengubah substansi isi.

B. STRUKTUR NASKAH ILMIAH

1. Judul

a. Judul hendaknya ringkas, efektif dan informatif, dengan jumlah 14 kata¸termasuk kata penghubung.
b. Jenis huruf *Cambria 14,* ditebalkan, dengan jarak baris 1 spasi.

2. Identitas Penulis

a. Artikel disertai dengan identitas penulis yang meliputi: Nama penulis tanpa gelar akademik (*Cambria 12,* ditebalkan), afiliasi kelembagaan penulis, alamat lembaga, dan *e-mail (Cambria 10, spasi 1).*
b. Nama penulis dan urutan penulis (bila lebih dari satu penulis) harus sudah disepakati semua penulis, biasanya berdasarkan besarnya kontribusi dan partisipasi dalam pelaksanaan penelitian dan penulisan laporan, dan semua penulis bertanggung jawab atas isi artikel.

3. Abstrak

a. Abstrak ditulis secara ringkas dan faktual, meliputi tujuan penelitian, metode penelitian, hasil dan simpulan.

b. Abstrak ditulis dalam bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia, panjang abstrak berkisar antara 150 - 250 kata dalam satu paragraf, huruf *(Cambria 10, spasi 1).*

4. Kata Kunci

a. Kata kunci terdiri atas 3 – 5 kata dan/atau kelompok kata.
b. Kata-kata diketik miring (*italic*), antara kata kunci dipisahkan oleh titik koma (;)

5. Pendahuluan

a. **Pendahuluan** jarak 1 spasi dan ditebalkan.
b. Pendahuluan hendaknya mengandung latar belakang masalah; hipotesis (bila ada), tujuan dan metode penelitian; umumnya artikel tidak terlalu ekstensif; pendahuluan mengacu pada beberapa pustaka yang menjadi landasan teori atau alasan penelitian.

6. Hasil dan Pembahasan

a. **Hasil dan Pembahasan**, jarak 1 spasi dan ditebalkan.
b. Sajian dalam hasil dan pembahasan ditulis secara bersistem, hanya hasil data/informasi yang terkait dengan tujuan penelitian; sederhanakan tabel dan menggunakan tabel terbuka, dan gambar peta lebih difokuskan pada objek yang diteliti serta jangan terlalu besar ukuran filenya serta rumit (diupayakan dalam format JPG); tabel dan gambar diberi nomor urut. Contoh penulisan tabel: Tabel 3.
c. Penggunaan subjudul dalam pembahasan sesuai dengan keperluan pembahasan.
d. Teknik pengutipan sumber rujukan menggunakan catatan kaki/*footnote*, menggunakan sistem sitasi *Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition, Cambria 10*, selengkapnya lihat contoh di ketentuan teknis penulisan catatan kaki.

7. Simpulan

a. **Simpulan**, jarak 1 spasi dan ditebalkan.
b. Simpulan hendaknya merupakan jawaban atas pertanyaan penelitian, dan diungkapkan bukan dalam kalimat stastistik.

8. Ucapan Terima Kasih

a. Bila ada **Ucapan Terimakasih**, jarak 1 spasi dan ditebalkan
b. Berisi ucapan terimakasih kepada lembaga pemberi dana, dan atau individu yang telah membantu dalam pelaksanaan penelitian dan penulisan artikel.

9. Daftar Pustaka

a. **Daftar Pustaka**, jarak 1 spasi dan ditebalkan
b. Literatur yang dicantumkan dalam daftar pustaka hanya memuat sumber-sumber yang dirujuk atau dikutip dalam artikel.

c. Sumber rujukan yang dirujuk dalam artikel, hendaknya merujuk dari salah satu atau beberapa artikel jurnal ilmiah.
d. Teknik penulisan daftar pustaka, menggunakan sistem sitasi *Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition font Cambria 12*. Selengkapnya bisa dilihat pada ketentuan teknis penulisan daftar pustaka.

C. KETENTUAN TEKNIS PENULISAN NASKAH

1. Penulisan Pengutipan

a. Pengutipan rujukan dalam pembahasan hendaknya tidak terlalu panjang.
b. Kutipan langsung kurang dari lima baris ditulis di antara tanda kutip lengkap bersatu dalam alinea dan dimiringkan (*italic*).
c. Kutipan langsung lima baris atau lebih ditulis dalam alinea tersendiri tanpa tanda kutip. Posisi penulisan diberi *indent* lurus dengan baris awal alinea.
d. Kutipan tidak langsung yaitu pengutipan sebuah teks yang disarikan dan dituliskan dalam kalimat sendiri, ditulis sebagai bagian dari alinea tanpa tanda kutip/tanda petik.
e. Pengutipan hasil penelitian atau pendapat orang lain, sebaiknya menggunakan kutipan tidak langsung (menggunakan kalimat sendiri, bukan kalimat yang persis sama).
f. Kutipan ayat Alquran dan Hadis dituliskan dengan huruf Arab sesuai teks aslinya, termasuk tanda-tanda bacanya, dengan menggunakan *Traditional Arabic* 16 cetak tebal. Ayat Alquran ditulis lengkap dengan nama dan nomor surah serta nomor ayat, sedangkan Hadis ditulis lengkap sanad dan rawinya serta dilengkapi *footnote* yang berisi: Nama kitab, jilid, bab, nomor hadis dan halaman. Contoh:

Berdasarkan firman Allah Swt. dalam surah Al-Ankabut 29: 67-69:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا آمِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ (67) وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُ أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِلْكَافِرِينَ (68) وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (69)

Hal ini sejalan dengan sabda Nabi Muhammad Saw.:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ (رَضِيَّ اللهُ عَنْهَا) قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم) إِذَا عَصَفَتِ الرِّيْحُ قَالَ: "اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَهَا وَخَيْرَ مَا فِيْهَا وَخَيْرَ ما أَرْسَلْتَ بِهِ، وَأَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّهَا وَشَرِّ مَا فِيْهَا وَشَرِّ مَا أَرْسَلْتَ بِهِ" (رواه مسلم)٠

g. Khusus pengutipan ayat Alquran yang tidak lengkap dalam satu ayat, diberi tanda titik tiga buah sebelum atau sesudahnya. Contoh:

... ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ...(الروم : 30 : 30)

h. Anotasi (keterangan pendek) ditulis di antara dua kurung besar [...] langsung setelah ungkapan atau kalimat yang diberi anotasi. Anotasi yang melebihi satu baris ditulis sebagai catatan kaki.

i. Kutipan dari ayat-ayat Alquran tidak diperlukan catatan kaki karena nama dan nomor surah serta nomor ayat telah dituliskan dalam ayat yang dikutip.

2. Penulisan Kutipan Catatan Kaki dan Daftar Pustaka

Teknik penulisan catatan kaki, menggunakan sistem sitasi *Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition font Cambria 10*, ditulis secara berurutan: Nama penulis [tanpa pangkat dan gelar], *Judul buku diketik miring,* cetakan/*edition* [jika ada], jilid/*series* [jika ada] (Tempat/kota penerbit: Nama penerbit, Tahun terbit), nomor halaman.

Buku yang disunting oleh editor diikuti "ed." tanpa kurung setelah penulisan nama. Jika buku ditulis tanpa kota penerbit diketik "t.k."; tanpa penerbit diketik "t.p."; jika tanpa tahun terbit diketik "t.t.". Apabila tahun penerbitan berupa tahun hijriyah diketik "H." setelah penyebutan tahun. Halaman tanpa penulisan simbol halaman, langsung pada penulisan angka. Apabila ingin menyebutkan lagi sumber yang terdahulu harus disebutkan nama penulis dan diikuti dengan nama buku yang dimaksud. Dalam penyebutan ulang ini, **tidak digunakan istilah** tertentu: **ibid.**, **op. cit.**, dan **loc. cit.**.

Sumber rujukan yang berasal dari bahasa Arab, ditulis dalam huruf latin berdasarkan pedoman transliterasi Tashwirul Afkar [*Legal of Congress*] dengan merubah *font* ke *Times New Arabic 10* (lihat pedoman transliterasi Tashwirul Afkar).

Teknik penulisan daftar pustaka, menggunakan sistem sitasi *Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition font Cambria 12*, ditulis secara berurutan: Nama penulis ditulis nama belakangnya lebih dahulu, diikuti nama depan dan nama tengah (atau inisial). *Judul buku (diketik miring)*.

Cetakan/*Edition.* Jilid/*Series* (bila ada). Kota penerbit: Nama penerbit, Tahun penerbitan.
Jika literatur ditulis lebih dari dua orang: Nama penulis pertama ditulis nama belakangnya lebih dahulu, dilanjutkan penulis kedua dan seterusnya dan nama belakang tidak perlu dibalik seperti penulis pertama. Ditulis 1 spasi, berurutan secara alfabetis tanpa nomor. Penulisan daftar pustaka tidak menggunakan et al., sebagai pengganti penulis kedua dan seterusnya.
Sumber rujukan yang berasal dari bahasa Arab, ditulis dalam huruf latin berdasarkan pedoman transliterasi Tashwirul Afkar [*Legal of Congress*] dengan merubah *font* ke *Times New Arabic* 12 (lihat pedoman transliterasi Tashwirul Afkar).

Dibawah ini beberapa contoh catatan kaki dan daftar pustaka untuk berbagai sumber kutipan:

a. Kutipan dari Buku

1) Satu penulis.

[1]Muh}ammad ‘A<bid Al-Ja>biri>, *Nah}nu Wa Al-Tura>th: Qira>at Mu’a>s}irat Fi> Tura>thina> Al-Falsafi>* (Beirut: Markaz al-Thaqafi> al-‘Arabi>, 1990), 29.

Al-Ja>biri>, Muh}ammad ‘A<bid. *Nah}nu Wa Al-Tura>th: Qira>at Mu’a>s}irat Fi> Tura>thina> Al-Falsafi>*. Beirut: Markaz al-Thaqafi> al-‘Arabi>, 1990.

2) Dua atau tiga penulis/editor [nama tetap dicantumkan].

[2]Atang Abdul Hakim dan Jaih Mubarok, *Metodologi Studi Islam* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 1999),47-48.

[3]Morris Neiburger, James G. Edinger, and William Bonner, eds., *Understanding Our Atmospheric Environment* (San Francisco, California: W. H. Freeman, 1973), 87.

Hakim, Atang Abd., dan Jaih Mubarok. *Metodologi Studi Islam*. Bandung: Rosda Karya, 1999.

Neiburger, Morris, James G. Edinger, and William Bonner, eds. *Understanding Our Atmospheric Environment*. San Francisco, California: W. H. Freeman, 1973.

3) Empat penulis/editor atau lebih, dalam catatan kaki dicantumkan hanya penulis/editor pertama diikuti *et al.*, dalam daftar pustaka dicantumkan semua penulis/editor.

[4] Philip S.Gorski et al., eds., *The Post-Secular in Quetion: Religion in Contemporary Society* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2012), 135.

Gorski, Philip S., David Kyuman Kim, John Torpey, and Jonathan Van Antwerpen, eds. *The Post-Secular in Quetion: Religion in Contemporary Society*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2012.

4) Jika mengutip sumber yang sudah dikutip sebelumnya (tanpa ibid. dan op.cit.).

[5]Jala>luddi>n Al-Suyu>t}i>, *Al-Itqa>n Fi>'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, Jilid 2 (Beirut: Da>rul-Fikr, t.t.),19.

[6]Al-Suyu>t}i>, *Al-Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, 77.

[7]Muh}ammad ibn 'Alawi> Al-Ma>liki> Al-H{asani>, *Zubdah Al-'Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n* (Jeddah: Da>r Al-Shuru>q, 1983), 24.

[8]Al-Suyu>t}i>, *Al-Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, 83.

[9]Al-H{asani>, *Zubdah Al-'Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, 28.

Al-Suyu>t}i>, Jala>luddi>n. *Al-Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*. Jilid 2. Beirut: Da>rul-Fikr, t.t.

Al-H{asani>, Muh}ammad ibn 'Alawi> Al-Ma>liki>. *Zubdah Al-'Itqa>n Fi> 'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*. Jeddah: Da>r Al-Shuru>q, 1983.

5) Jika buku yang dikutip lagi itu lebih dari satu jilid, dan yang digunakan lebih dari satu jilid.

[10]Al-Zarkashi>, *Al-Burha>n Fi>'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, Jilid 1 (Beirut: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 1391 H.), 45.

[11]Al-Zarkashi>, *Al-Burha>n Fi>'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*, Jilid 2 (Beirut: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 1391 H.), 16.

Al-Zarkashi>. *Al-Burha>n Fi>'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*. Jilid 1. Beirut: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 1391 H.

———. *Al-Burha>n Fi>'Ulu>m Al-Qur'a>n*. Jilid 2. Beirut: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 1391 H.

6) Buku teks terjemahan.

[12] Mark Woodward, *Islam Jawa: Kesalehan Normatif versus Kebatinan*, trans. Hairus Salim "Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism" (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999), 88.

Woodward, Mark. *Islam Jawa: Kesalehan Normatif versus Kebatinan*. Translated by Hairus Salim "Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism". Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999.

7) Buku terbitan lembaga/badan/organisasi yang tidak ada nama penulisnya.

[13] Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, *Pendidikan Anti Korupsi Untuk Perguruan Tinggi*, Cetakan I (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Bagian Hukum, 2011), 38.

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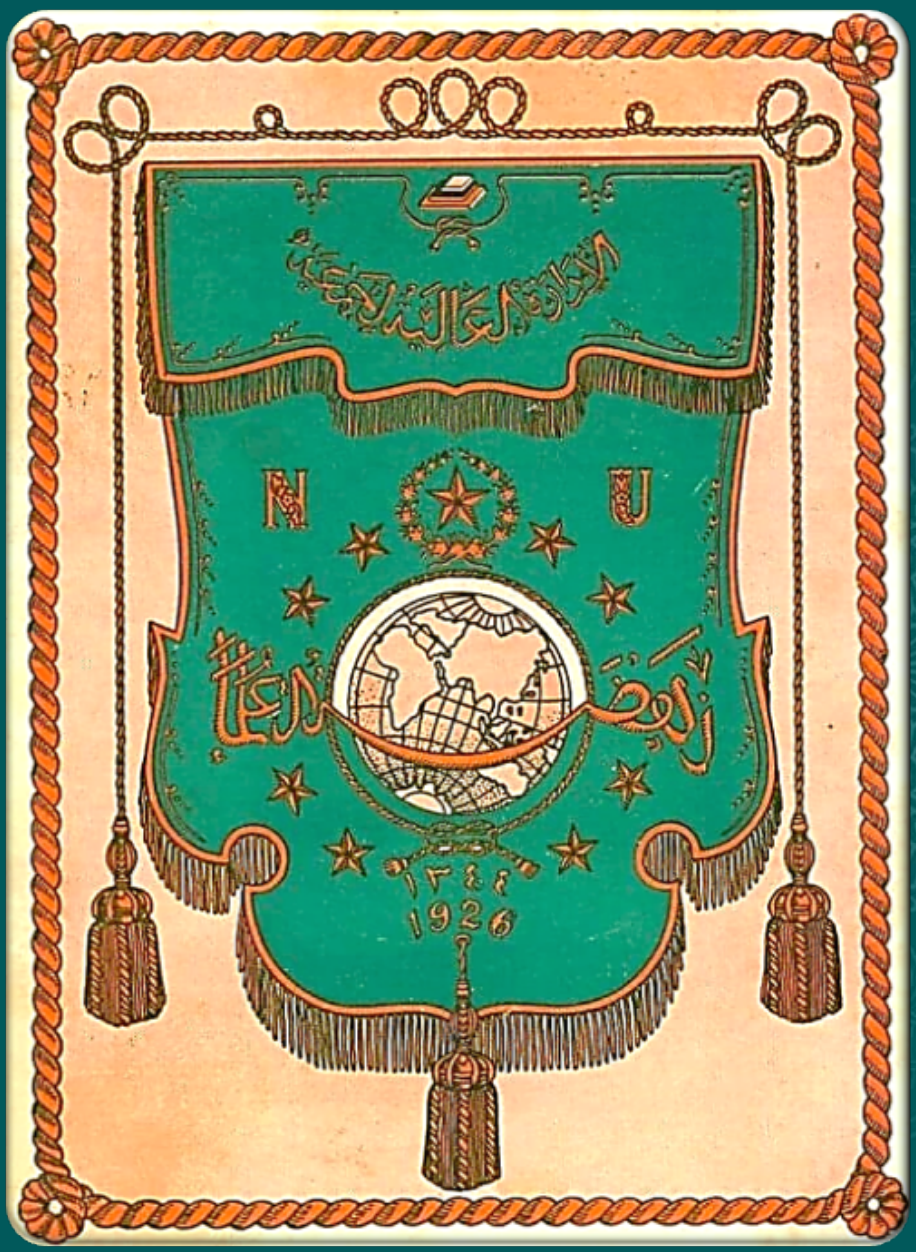

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